

news

Inquiry urged into police driving

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

A review of police driver training was demanded yesterday after a nurse was killed by a patrol car which hit her stationary vehicle during a high-speed mock chase. But the officer driving the police car, which rounded a bend on a 60mph road at around 100mph, will not face disciplinary action.

Judith Hood, a 27-year-old orthopaedic nurse of Stevenage, Hertfordshire, died in June last year when a police vehicle rammed into the back of her Citroen AX as it stood at temporary traffic lights on the A10 at Harston, Cambridgeshire.

Caroline Mitchell, of the Police Complaints Authority, said yesterday that the two police cars travelled at "indefensible speeds on public roads".

The driver of the first or "bandit" vehicle, Constable Gerard Sharratt, was fined £750 for careless driving and banned from driving for six months in July. He will not face disciplinary proceedings because under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act an officer convicted of a criminal offence cannot face disciplinary proceedings on the same facts. However, the PCA said the second officer, an unnamed driving instructor from the Metropolitan Police, who was in the following vehicle, should be admonished for failing to follow guidelines on pursuing driving and training.

Ms Mitchell, announcing the PCA's decision on disciplinary action, said: "These two police cars were travelling at indefensible speeds on public roads. Public safety is paramount and police officers should always drive so that they can stop safely. It is sometimes better for a pursuit to be abandoned ..."

"I have discussed this tragic incident with the Home Office and it will be considered by the Association of Chief Police Officers' traffic committee. Such a dreadful accident must not be allowed to happen again. Lessons must be learnt." She added: "I will be recommending that instructors should make enquiries about any road works ... before training our public roads."

PC Sharratt was a senior instructor at the Metropolitan Police's driving school in Hendon, north London. He remains suspended from driving duties.

Scotland Yard said that it wanted to take the opportunity to repeat its condolences to Ms Hood's family for a deeply regrettable tragedy.



Last respects: The comedian Ronnie Barker arriving at All Saints church, Corston, near Bath, yesterday for the funeral of Leslie Crowther, who died last month aged 63. Hundreds attended the service and proceedings were relayed by loudspeaker to those unable to get in. Photograph: Ian Hodgson

Lisburn bombs: Blasts will stiffen party resolve for action against terrorists

Major refuses to pronounce death of the peace process

ANTHONY BEVINS
Political Editor

The Prime Minister last night refused to pronounce the peace process dead in the wake of the Lisburn bombs.

With representatives arriving in Bournemouth for the start of today's Conservative Conference - amidst the extremely tight security that has become commonplace on such occasions - the return of the bomb to Northern Ireland will stiffen party resolve to take a hard line against the terrorists.

But John Major's resilience came through strongly in Bournemouth last night. Staging an impromptu press conference at the Conservative headquarters in the Highcliff Hotel, Mr Major said the peace process was certainly not dead.

"So much depends on who did this. If this was one of the splinter groups, then they have been looking at that sort of activity for some time."

"And I have to say that it isn't helpful when people keep speculating that the peace process is over. I have heard that re-

peatedly over the last four or five years, and I have to say to you the people of Northern Ireland do not wish the peace process to be over."

"The vast majority of people in Northern Ireland, some of them for the first time in their lives, have seen what it was actually like to have 18 months without bombs, without violence, and with the changing circumstances of life in Northern Ireland."

The Prime Minister added: "The pressure from them to make sure that this process continues is unrelenting, and I am on their side."

I want this to continue and I want to reach a satisfactory outcome."

"But if anybody thinks, whether it's a splinter group or the Provisional IRA, that they can bomb the British government out of the policy stance that they think is right for

Northern Ireland, then they are making a very serious and fundamental mistake."

Nevertheless, the return of bombing to Northern Ireland and security targets was being seen by Conservative MPs as the effective end of the peace process.

But Mr Major's determination should not be underestimated.

Following a brief session with John Bruton, the Irish Prime

February 9, 1996 – Bombing of South Quay in London's Docklands, shortly after the IRA formally announced that its ceasefire was at an end, killed two people and injured many more.

February 18 – IRA man Edward O'Brien killed by his own bomb when it accidentally ripped apart the bus on which he was travelling along Aldwych, central London.

June 15 – IRA struck outside the capital for the first time in its renewed mainland campaign with a bomb in Manchester which injured 200 people.

July 13 – Car-bomb devastated Killyhevlin Hotel, Enniskillen, injuring 17. Irish

Continuity Army, breakaway group linked to Sinn Fein, came under suspicion.

July 15 – Metropolitan Police seized parts for 36 bombs they believed would have been used imminently in London.

September 23 – Raids in London and West Sussex result in IRA suspect Diarmuid O'Neill being shot dead and five arrested.

September 23 – Security forces in Belfast made safe a car-bomb consisting of 250lb of homemade explosives. Irish Continuity Army said they were behind the device.

October 7 – Attack on Triplex Barracks, Lisburn, Co Antrim, the Army's Northern Ireland headquarters. Bombs planted in the heart of the base injure up to 20 people.

Trail of death and destruction

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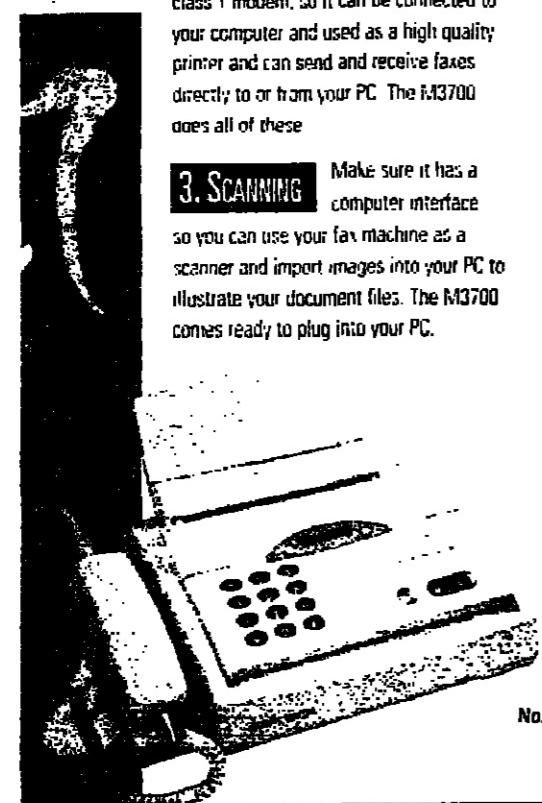
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Security services expected backlash

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

Security sources have been warning of a violent backlash since anti-terrorist officers arrested five suspected IRA members, shot dead another, and seized explosives in London two weeks ago.

Yesterday those fears were realised. The attack on the Army's Northern Ireland headquarters was the latest act of terrorism since the ceasefire was brought to a shuddering end at 7.01pm on 9 February when a 1,000lb lorry bomb destroyed a large part of Docklands in east London and killed two people.

Hopes that the Docklands bomb was a one-off were destroyed days later, when police discovered a Semtex bomb in a telephone box in Charing Cross Road, central London. That device was made safe.

Three days later, Edward O'Brien, an IRA bomber, was killed when his explosive accidentally detonated and ripped apart the bus on which he was travelling in Aldwych, central London. But that lucky break for the security forces did not stop the attacks. On 9 March a small bomb exploded in Fulham, west London, causing minor damage.

On 17 April an empty house at the Quebec barracks in Oschersleben, Germany, was damaged by another small bomb. Londoners escaped a far greater threat a week later when two huge Semtex bombs placed at the south side of Hammersmith Bridge in west London failed to go off.

On 15 June the IRA struck outside the capital for the first time in its renewed mainland

campaign, bringing horror and mayhem to Manchester with a huge one-tonne bomb which ripped through the city centre, injuring around 200 people, several seriously.

It was possibly the biggest bomb the Provos had ever set off on the mainland.

On 28 June the terrorists switched tactics again. They fired a volley of three mortars at the Quebec barracks in Oschersleben, Germany. There were no injuries.

The campaign appeared to have shifted to Northern Ireland on 13 July when a 1,200lb car-bomb devastated the Killyhevlin Hotel in Enniskillen, injuring 17, but the IRA denied responsibility, suggesting a splinter group may have been to blame.

Londoners escaped a further spiral towards the renewal of full-blown conflict gathered pace as security forces made safe a car bomb made up of 250lb of homemade explosives. The Irish Continuity Army said they were behind the bomb. The next day Ulster Defence Association and Ulster Freedom Fighters men inside the top security Maze Prison told their political representatives that they no longer had any confidence in the multi-party talks on the province's future.



Devastation: Damage after February's London bomb

significant shorts

More action sought against child-abusers

A national network of multi-agency teams is needed to hunt down child-abusers, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children said yesterday.

Government plans to clamp down on child abuse did not go far enough, said the NSPCC, which published a guide for parents and carers on abuse and called on ministers to fund a pilot of its proposed network.

It also called for the criminal justice system to be more child-friendly and said that vetting was needed to stop paedophiles using the Internet for their activities.

The Government has announced plans for a register of convicted sex offenders, a new offence effectively prohibiting paedophiles from seeking work with children and proposals to give employers' access to job applicants' criminal records. *Glenda Cooper*

Murdered boy suffered at mother's hands

A murdered boy of six had been subjected to a catalogue of cruelty by his mother and her husband, a jury was told yesterday.

Rikki Neave was punched, kicked, lifted into the air by his throat, thrown upstairs and dangled from a bridge by his ankles; it was said at Northampton Crown Court where his mother Ruth, 28, of Peterborough, denies murder.

Christine Seaborne, who knew Ruth Neave when she lived in March, Cambridgeshire, said she had once seen Rikki being dangled from a bridge by Ruth Neave.

"Ruth was with another girl and they were standing there and Ruth had Rikki hanging over the bridge by his ankles," Mrs Seaborne told the jury. "As I walked by, they were just laughing ... he was screaming." The case continues.

Nobel prize for immune system discovery

The Nobel Medicine Prize has been awarded this year to two scientists who discovered in 1975 how the immune system recognises and then kill virus-infected cells.

The work by Peter Doherty, an Australian, and Rolf Zinkernagel, a Swiss, at the John Curtin School of Medical Research in Canberra could have important applications in curing diseases such as cancer, diabetes, AIDS and multiple sclerosis.

Sten Grillner, chairman of the Nobel medicine committee, said the discovery changed the direction of immunology, unlocking the mystery of how a vaccine needed to be composed.

The work was relevant both to efforts to strengthen the immune response against invading micro-organisms and certain forms of cancer, and to lessen the effects of auto-immune reactions in inflammatory diseases like rheumatic conditions, multiple sclerosis and diabetes.

The winner of the economics prize will be announced today, and the physics and chemistry prizes on Wednesday, while the Nobel Peace Prize will be awarded in Oslo on Friday.

Charles Arthur

'Girl killed at age of 12'

A girl aged 16 appeared in court yesterday accused of committing a murder four years ago, when she was 12.

The case against the teenager, who cannot be named, was adjourned until 8 November at Winchester Crown Court. She is alleged to have murdered Katie Rackoff, an 18-year-old hairdresser, whose body was found in a cemetery at Farnborough, Hampshire.

Sex offender pleads for a safe home

A child sex offender and his wife were yesterday at the centre of a High Court battle for the right to be housed in a "safe" and after being housed from their home.

Jimmy Larwood, 41, was driven out of his council flat overlooking a children's playground and close to a school in North Woolwich, east London, by neighbours after being identified in a Sunday newspaper.

James Dawson, for the prosecution, said Southgate, 49, pocketed not only an estimated £1,400 from the Hope and Anchor public house in Poplar, east London, but about £600 raised during an emotional evening he had staged the night before.

The couple, now homeless, were forced out of the flat soon after Larwood's release from prison where he had served four years for sexually abusing boys.

Southgate, of Old Windsor, Berkshire, denies charge of stealing "a quantity of cash belonging to the Dunblane Fund". He admits involving the pub inings. The case continues.

Dunblane cash pub manager 'was suicidal'

A local pub manager sounded "suicidal" shortly before fleeing to Spain with £2,000 in bar takings and cash raised for the Dunblane tragedy victims and their families, a jury was told yesterday.

Patrick Southgate had repeatedly pleaded with his lover Margaret Buchanan not to end their relationship, she told Southwark Crown Court. "He was begging, imploring me to change my mind. He was crying, but I said no. He sounded suicidal."

James Dawson, for the prosecution, said Southgate, 49, pocketed not only an estimated £1,400 from the Hope and Anchor public house in Poplar, east London, but about £600 raised during an emotional evening he had staged the night before.

Southgate, of Old Windsor, Berkshire, denies charge of stealing "a quantity of cash belonging to the Dunblane Fund". He admits involving the pub inings. The case continues.

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news

EMI takes the drugs out of the Beatles era

History is rewritten as references to psychedelic influences removed from cover of £100 video

DAVID LISTER,
Arts News Editor

A £100 boxed set of *The Beatles Anthology* videos has had its sleeve notes censored to remove all mention of drugs. *The Independent* has learned. The eight-volume set, which runs for 10 hours – twice the length of the anthology series on television – went on sale yesterday.

Buyers will be unaware that the video sleeves have been censored by EMI, the Beatles' record company. A number of drug-related passages have been deleted including a quote by Ringo saying that "the grass

Beatles talking about drugs and the psychedelic era.

One senior Beatles' aide said: "It is pretty amazing that 30 years after the event business men are still taking fright at references to drugs. The videos contain numerous mentions of drugs, none of which has been edited out. George Harrison talks about how he and John Lennon were slipped LSD by their dentist and went into a lift where they thought a red light was a fire and emerged from the lift screaming."

The three surviving Beatles also reveal that they "smoked marijuana for breakfast" during the making of the 1965 film *Help!*. Last night a spokesman for Parlophone, the division of EMI which deals with The Beatles, said he did not wish to comment on the changes.

Paul McCartney gave the first critic's view of the complete eight-video set. He said: "Seeing some of the stuff I've seen in the videos I think proves we were a good band. I don't have to say that with any arrogance now, because I'm looking back on it as if it was four other people. But we were bloody good."

"The videos will be on sale individually too, but demand is likely to be heaviest for the complete package. At HMV in Liverpool 50 sets were sold in the first hour of business; and it is estimated that about 200,000 sets will be sold nationwide. Ironically this figure is likely to be beaten by a new video shortly to be released by Oasis, often referred to as the Nineties' answer to The Beatles."

At Apple Corps yesterday The Beatles' management privately said they were stunned that EMI had chosen to censor remarks about drugs, particularly as the videos themselves contain unseen footage of The

was influential in a lot of our changes, especially with the writers". That reference, implying that Lennon and McCartney were helped in their composing by soft drugs, has been removed, along with a passage by the group's long serving press officer, Derek Taylor.

Mr Taylor had written about how The Beatles had their minds expanded by marijuana, and that two of their albums, *Rubber Soul*, and *Revolver*, showed "the beneficial effects of herbal jazz cigarettes".

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Beatles talking about drugs and the psychedelic era.

Ironically this figure is likely to be beaten by a new video shortly to be released by Oasis, often referred to as the Nineties' answer to The Beatles.

Neither group though has a chance of having the best selling music video ever. Riverdance's estimated £2m sale looks safe for the time being.



Still rocking the establishment: references to soft and hard drugs have been deleted from *The Beatles Anthology* by their record company EMI

Photograph: Apple Corps

For sale: The contraceptive that cures flatulence – bids begin at \$15,000,000

DAVID OSBORNE
New York

A divorce case now underway in suburban Atlanta would have passed unremarked by the world except for one thing: the husband in the case is a descendant of a co-founder of the Coca-Cola empire. More than that, he claims he is the rightful owner of an original copy of the drink's secret formula and that he is willing to sell it.

Suddenly, the divorce of Frank M Robinson II from his wife, Patti, from whom he has been separated for two years, has risen far above the mundane. In the 110 years since Coca-Cola was concocted by an Atlanta chemist, John Stith Pemberton, *imprecise make-up* has reigned as the world's most celebrated corporate secret.

Mr Robinson, who was in the divorce court last Friday, is the grandson of Frank Robinson, who was Mr Pemberton's closest assistant. It was Robinson who chose the Coca-Cola name and drafted the following rendition of it that is still the product's logo. According to the living Robinson, his grandfather also copied by hand the exact recipe. That note, he says, was given to him by his own father in 1970.



Bear necessities: The Coca-Cola recipe, guarded for a century, could finally be revealed

The circumstances of Mr Robinson are not what they might be. He was one of the heirs to a family fortune of £10m but now, 57 and afflicted with prostate cancer, he is in desperate need of cash. A real-estate broker, he has no qualms about putting his grandfather's note up for sale. "I've got the real thing and I'll get every dime I can for it," he said.

There is a problem: the documents are in the hands of Patti, who claims that they were given to her by her estranged husband as a pre-marriage romantic gesture in 1991.

Coca-Cola's assumed properties extend well beyond the ability to quench thirst. A Harvard University study in 1969 found it could work as a spermicide, and it is widely held to combat flatulence. But few myths have endured longer than that of the recipe. In 1977, the company withdrew from the Indian market when Delhi insisted on knowing the drink's ingredients. Eight years later, Coca-Cola was forced to reveal in court an attempt by some of its bottlers to lay their hands on the secret. Mr Robinson says his papers include a list of the ingredients

for the syrup that provides the essential flavour, that for generations have been known only as 7X. Supposedly, it is a mix of oils from the rinds of lemons, oranges, coriander and nutmeg. The original recipe also, of course, included a cocaine extract, long since dispensed with.

In truth, the exact value of the

Robinson document may not be that tremendous. Coca-Cola itself is disputing its authenticity, insisting that the only real copy of the recipe lies inside a company vault. "We've never seen the evidence that Mr Pemberton shared the formula with

Coca-Cola: The facts

It would take 23 hours for all the Coke ever sold to flow over Niagara Falls.

Thirty times more bottles of Coke are drunk each day than there are letters in the Bible.

In 1993 an author claimed he had stumbled across the original recipe while carrying out some research in the Coca-Cola archives in Atlanta. The company dismissed it as a fake, "the latest in a long line of unsuccessful attempts to reveal the 107-year-old mystery".

The "hobnob skirt" bottle design was patented in July 1916; it is supposed to resemble the shape of a cola nut.

The average United States

anybody – even Mr Robinson, a Coca-Cola spokesman asserted.

Much of the planet is in any case already the battlefield of a cola war that long ago transcended any mystery about how it should be made. Indeed, it was only a decade after Pemberton made his brew that a North Carolina chemist, Caleb Bradham, came up with his version, to become Pepsi Cola.

The third cola giant is the Coca-Cola Corporation of Canada which manufactures generic brands, including Richard Branson's Virgin Cola and Classic Cola sold by Sainsbury.

But to the warriors in the

Today, however, Coca-Cola outsells Pepsi by 3-1 worldwide.

The third cola giant is the Coca-Cola Corporation of Canada which manufactures generic brands, including Richard Branson's Virgin Cola and Classic Cola sold by Sainsbury.

But to the warriors in the boardrooms the manoeuvres of Mr Robinson in the courtroom will be only of limited concern. If he can wrest his grandfather's papers from his wife, maybe he will be able to sell them. The buyer, however, is less likely to be a rival than an enthusiast for Coca-Cola collectables.



Blow-outs can be good for you

GLENDA COOPER

Don't blame it on the bacon and the bangers any longer. While the British have resigned themselves to having the most aesthetically lamentable diet in Europe for years, the Consumers' Association claimed yesterday it could be healthier than that of our European neighbours.

According to *Health Which?*

magazine, we have been forced the idea that fusilli and fettuccine are always superior to meat and two veg, whereas the reality is that traditional British food can sometimes be less fatty and lower in calories than the Mediterranean diet.

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"This is quite an achievement

for a nation, whose culinary triumphs include the deep-fried Mars bar and the black pudding. But according to Amanda Ursell, dietitian and food writer, it is time to stand up for the British diet which has been bullied and belittled unfairly.

Fancy a healthy-looking Greek salad with garlic bread? Frankly you'd be better off with shepherd's pie and broccoli.

says Ms Ursell: "You'd wipe 429

calories and a massive 39g of fat off your daily intake."

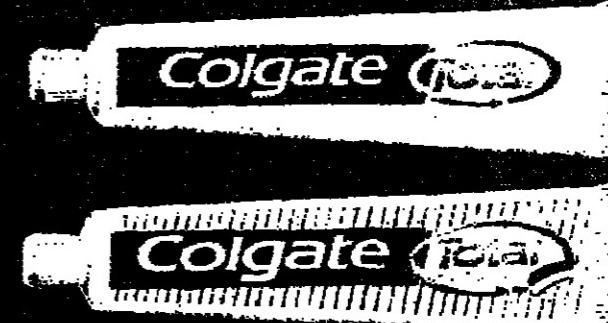
Or have you been denying yourself a full Sunday roast for Italian risotto and tomato side salad?" There's really no debate on the fat front; it is a great British lean triumph," added Ms Ursell. "Roast chicken, roast spuds, baked parsnips, cabbage and sweetcorn come out with 17grams v 30grams [4g v 11g of saturated fat]."

Lean pork chops with boiled potatoes, carrots and frozen peas score more highly on the vitamin C and vitamin E stakes than lasagnes with a chunk of bread as well as having 22 per cent less fat.

But before we throw away the olive oil and the sun-dried tomatoes, the British Heart Foundation warned that the British diet is still too high in saturated fats, which leaves us with a greater risk of heart attacks and strokes.

"We've got to cut down totally," said Belinda Linden, cardiac nurse adviser to the BHF. "Cutting saturated fat is crucial to our diet ... This is not the time to go back to black pudding."

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news

Cromwell St memories turn to rubble



Demolition work begins on House of Horrors begins as debate opens over what should become of site

JOJO MOYES

Demolition work began at the Cromwell Street "House of Horrors" yesterday, as a row erupted over the disclosure that serial killer Rosemary West will be allowed a say in what happens to the site.

Watched by hundreds of onlookers, the demolition team moved in shortly after dawn and began preparing the outside of the three-storey Edwardian building for scaffolding and huge hoardings.

Gloucester city council has commissioned a survey to ask relatives of the West's victims, neighbours and local residents what should become of the site, where West and her late husband murdered and buried nine young women. Although the council said no direct approaches would be made to Rosemary West - now serving 10 life sentences - it would be prepared to consider any views that may be expressed through her solicitor, Leo Goatey.

Gloucester Toy MP Douglas French was among those who condemned the council's decision. "This is a grotesquely insensitive step. Rose West is a convicted mass murderer. She no longer owns a property in Cromwell Street and she is no longer a citizen of Gloucester. Her views are irrelevant."

Mr French added that the families of the Wests' victims should consider suing the West estate for the suffering they had endured.

He said he had been investigating the possibility of a civil action against the West estate, and concluded that the new rules allowing lawyers to take on no-win-no-fee cases made it feasible.

"It would be for the shock and distress the families have suffered and are continuing to suffer. If the families were so minded they could come together and get a lawyer to act on their behalf. But I know that some of them wouldn't wish to go down that road because it would add to their distress."

A former teenage nanny to the West children who survived a terrifying attack by the Wests yesterday called for a memorial to the victims to be erected at Gloucester Cathedral.

Caroline Roberts described

the start of demolition work at 25 Cromwell Street as "one of the best days of my life. I think they should destroy everything, just burn down the lot. There is no place in Gloucester for that house," she told the *Western Daily Press*.

Stephen West, the son of Stephen and Fred West, said yesterday he would like a memorial garden on the site of 25

Rosemary West's views we won't necessarily act on them."

He added: "This has been a painful chapter in Gloucester's history and whatever happens, we don't want a dispute over whether it is right. We want a consensus."

Final act: Demolition work starting yesterday at 25 Cromwell Street, above, flowers left outside the house for those who died, top left, and a local newspaper billboard of the rising death count

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PHOTO

Lives at risk as 'worried well' demand flu jabs

GLENDA COOPER

The "worried well" are being given vital influenza vaccines intended for the sick and vulnerable, the Department of Health said yesterday. As many as one in four vaccines may be given to people who do not fall into the high-risk groups as defined by the department.

The flu vaccine is intended for people with chronic heart or chest complaints, chronic kidney disease, diabetes, lowered immunity, or any other serious illness as well as the elderly living in residential homes. This year, 6 million doses will be available at a cost of £30m.

But uptake by high-risk groups is estimated at no more than 50 per cent, although the vaccine is highly effective. A study in Leicester showed that up to 45 per cent of hospital admissions due to flu complications could be saved by targeting those most at risk.

Dr Jon Van-Tam, lecturer in public health medicine and epidemiology at University Hospital, Nottingham, who conducted the Leicester study, said: "Flu vaccination can reduce hospitalisation for pneumonia, influenza, bronchitis and emphysema by 60 per cent. This clearly shows the importance and efficacy of flu vaccines for those at higher risk."

In 1993, 13,000 deaths were

'For young, fit people an attack of flu is preferable to having a vaccine every year'

associated with flu in the United Kingdom. The last big outbreak in 1989 led to around 27,000 deaths. Doctors believe 75 per cent of these deaths could be avoided by repeat vaccination.

Research in GP practices by Dr John Watkins, director of primary health care at Gwent Health Commission, found that in 25 per cent of cases the vaccine did not go to someone in a high-risk group.

This could mean that sometimes a doctor decides a patient is at risk despite falling outside one of the recognised brackets.

But Dr Watkins added: "I think that probably a significant number of that group are healthy."

Dr Watkins said the misdirection of some of the vaccine was an inevitable consequence of raising public awareness. "The more you raise public awareness the more you attract people who are not necessarily in the high risk groups," he said. "You get this trade off."

Doctors advise that it is better for the young and healthy to suffer three or four days of flu than to have a jab, as a bout of the illness provides several years of good immunity against a particular strain.

"On balance we take the view that for young, fit people an attack of influenza is the preferred option to having a vaccine every year," said Dr Douglas Fleming, director of the Royal College of General Practitioners flu research unit in Birmingham.

Dr Fleming said the research unit would not use the word "epidemic" for a flu outbreak unless it became really serious. In previous years a figure of more than 150 GP visits per 100,000 population per month has been said to be an epidemic. He said it would be an "unusual" winter if visits went above 200 and above 400.

Such a level has not been seen since 1976 although the 1989 outbreak fell just below it. In 1969 there was a pandemic when the level shot above 1,000 GP visits.

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Seven-year-olds 'should learn Latin'

JUDITH JUDD

Education Editor

Primary-school children might benefit from learning Spanish or even Latin, the Government's chief curriculum adviser said yesterday.

Dr Nick Tate, chief executive of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, was speaking at a conference on the role of modern languages in the primary curriculum.

Today the conference will hear from classicists who say that learning Latin from the age of seven improves children's English and particularly their grammar.

Jean Cross, from St John's primary school in Camborne, Cornwall, will demonstrate how she teaches Latin to seven-year-olds. She says their use of language improves dramatically.

Dr Tate made it clear that the authority has not yet decided its policy on languages in primary schools. Both the Government and Labour have promised that there will be no big curriculum changes before 2000, though

Labour wants modern languages to be compulsory in primary schools.

Dr Tate said that, if a language were to be made compulsory, it had to be decided which it should be. There might be a case for Latin as a basis for other languages or for Spanish which was spoken by far more people world-wide than French.

"Are there benefits from heightening their awareness of language that survive the transfer from one language to another?" he asked. "What are the particular benefits from an early study of Latin, not least in laying the foundations for a later study of the Romance languages?

Today he said: "France has traditionally occupied a special place in England's consciousness, not least because of the history we have shared from medieval times and the constant cultural exchange between the educated classes. But should this continue?"

Peter Jones of Friends of Classics said that research in the United States in the Seventies

showed that a little regular Latin for 10-year-olds advanced their spelling, knowledge about words and reading by up to a year.

Barbara Bell, secretary of the Joint Association of Classical Teachers, who will address the conference in London today, said the association was producing materials to teach Latin to pupils aged between seven and eleven. "We are suggesting schools might offer half an hour's Latin a week. Of course this would be optional."

She said that in Jean Cross's Latin lessons seven-year-olds were using such terms as adjectives, verbs, nouns and prepositions which caused much older children to flounder. "They act out myths such as Romulus and Remus. It is not dreary rote learning but tremendous fun."

The National Union of Teachers said that the demands of the primary national curriculum were already heavy. The proposal would necessitate a big investment in teacher-training.

Insurers act to control use of genetic tests

CHARLES ARTHUR

Science Editor

British insurance companies appointed an independent adviser on genetics testing yesterday, potentially opening up an era when your DNA could determine the level of your life- and health-insurance premiums.

Sandy Raeburn, a professor of clinical genetics at Nottingham University, said that he would be working with the Association of British Insurers to draw up a code of practice on the use of genetic information by the end of the year.

But Standard Life was quick to say yesterday that it did not think it was appropriate to ask for the results of genetic tests when issuing life policies worth less than £100,000 linked to a mortgage. Peter Robertson, as-

sistant general manager, said: "For the moment our stance is clear. We do not want to know about genetic tests."

But Mr Robertson said he could not guarantee the company would ignore such information in the future. "Having talked to a number of geneticists, they say we would be foolish to ignore genetic tests forever, because they may prove to be exceptionally useful."

Professor Raeburn said that he would seek more information about the industry's application of genetic testing. "We don't know how many people might have been unable to take insurance unjustifiably. Nor do we know what problems insurance companies might have had if somebody knew they had a genetic condition which was important and didn't mention it."

Present testing can show if someone has genes which indicate a predisposition to diseases such as bowel and breast cancer. But this does not mean they will develop those diseases, because there could be other, as yet unidentified, genes which mitigate the disease genes' effects.

The ABI said its members had a right to be informed about the results of any genetic tests undertaken by potential policyholders.

MPs on the Commons Science and Technology Select Committee last year accused insurers of complacency over issues such as the possibility of charging people with defective genes prohibitively high premiums and called for a code of practice. The Government rejected this, saying simply that the industry should make further progress.

news

That was the week, that was ... for back pain, asthma, flu awareness and, whisper it not, the Wonderbra

CLARE GARNER

In the next few days you are being asked to Make a Difference. You may have minded your Ps and Qs on last week's National Courtesy Day, but this week you're supposed to be minding about a whole lot more.

By the time you've finished boosting your bosom for breast cancer, sporting your grottiest tie for muscular dystrophy, fixing up a flu jab for an elderly friend and taking a bungee jump for the YMCA, you may feel like bundling yourself off to bed with a chronic bout of compassion fatigue.

This week, a myriad of weird and wonderful causes ranging from the worthy to the Wonderbra are clamouring for the public's attention. It is Muscular Dystrophy Week, Children's Books Week, YMCA Week, Wonderbra Week, Miscarriage Awareness Week, National School Film Week, Flu Awareness Week, National Asthma Week, National Back Pain



Makes you wonder: Czech model, Eva "Hello Boys" Herzigova, promotes the Wonderbra with the help of publicists and London band, Wonderbras.

Photographs: Tom Pliston

Week and Cruse Bereavement Care Awareness Week.

Then there's National Poetry Day, World Mental Health Day and, to round off the week,

a new import from the United States Make a Difference Day.

Community Service Volunteers (CSV), the organiser of Make a Difference Day, is "very

conscious" of the increasing competition for the nation's goodwill. "What we're asking for is care not cash," said Chris Reed, a CSV spokesman, who

hopes 10,000 Britons will volunteer. "I know it sounds a bit cheesy, but we're asking people to give their time. Just a couple of hours on a Saturday to do

something in their community."

"Everyone has something to offer," says Elisabeth Hoodless, executive director of CSV. "Fifty percent of the population are

already volunteers. Half of the rest are waiting to be asked."

Well, are they? The real question is: Do any of these national awareness days, or weeks, really make a difference? Is

National Back Day nothing more than a pain in the proverbial neck? How does one discriminate between one door-to-door collection and another? This ribbon and that?

And with the Conservative Party Conference and Eva "Hello Boys" Herzigova jetting into London to launch National Wonderbra Week, do any of the causes stand a chance of publicity? The Muscular Dystrophy Group has given serious thought as to whether to abandon their awareness week.

"Last year and the year before we were questioning whether it was the most effective use of our time, particularly as there are so many other weeks going on," said David Sowter, the group's director of fundraising. As an opportunity for raising awareness, the week is "quite limited", he added.

One event - Grotty Tie Day - does capture the public's imagination, but people rarely associate the gag with the disease. "It doesn't do much to

promote the name," admitted Mr Sowter. "It's like the Grand National. Few people know who is sponsoring it. Or Red Nose Day. I don't think a lot of people realise to which good causes the money will go."

But William Sieghart, who is organising Thursday's National Poetry Day, claims that the timing is helpful. "We always have Poetry Day at this time of year, when the publishers have been in Frankfurt and the politicians are making a lot of noise," he said.

As for hogging the headlines and diverting attention away from charities, Mr Sieghart is unapologetic. "I think poetry is a worthy thing. Most people turn to it in times of trouble and strife," he said.

For some more than others, Weeks and Days are a wonderful marketing wheeze. As a plug for the profile of Playtime, Wonderbra Week has been a winner. The three-year-old company doubled its sales during its first week last year and for every one of the 30,000 bras it sold, it donated a £1 to Breakthrough Breast Cancer.

This year, Wonderbra is inviting the public to join a host of "upfront" bra-wearing stars in an action-packed week of nationwide fun and "uplifting" events. You can, for example, guess how long the factory takes to make the biggest ever bra - cup size, one and a half metres.

For those with an insatiable appetite for do-gooder Days, next week is Make a Will Week. Next Wednesday is Worldwide Day of Action Against McDonald's. And creeping up at the end of the month there is ... Bug Buster Day, Flu Awareness Week, National Asthma Week, National Back Pain Week, National Poetry Day, World Mental Health Day, Cruse Bereavement Care Awareness Week, Muscular Dystrophy Week, Children's Book Week, YMCA Week, National Wonderbra Week, Miscarriage Awareness Week, National School Film Week Day, and Make a Difference Day.

Misadventure verdict on beach children

A coroner yesterday recorded a verdict of misadventure on Jodi and Tom Loughlin whose bodies were found two weeks after they disappeared from a beach near Hunstanton, Norfolk.

Norwich district coroner, William Armstrong, heard that Jodi, six, and Tom, four, were swept out to sea from Holme beach on the second day of their summer holiday.

The children's bodies were washed up on separate beaches two weeks after their disappearance sparked a three-day land, sea and air search in August. They were buried after a joint funeral service in Upper Norwood, south London, a week ago.

Jodi and Tom's parents, Kevin Loughlin and Lynette Thornton, both 38 and from Upper Norwood, said they took their eyes off the children for five minutes.

Speaking after the inquest, Mr Loughlin said he hoped the deaths would raise awareness of the dangers of Britain's coastline.

"I hope people will realise the dangers that exist along the shoreline and hopefully some action will take place to raise people's awareness, particularly in places like Holme where there are hidden shelves which people who aren't local aren't necessarily aware of."

Mr Loughlin told the inquest in Norwich that the family had arrived at Holme at about 3pm

on 18 August. He and Lynette chose a spot on the busy beach and sat down with Jodi and Tom, who rushed off to the water, about 400 yards away.

After a few minutes Jodi rushed off excitedly to join her brother, Mr Loughlin said. The parents put on some sun cream then Ms Thornton went to look for the children.

The couple believed they had taken their eyes off the children for no more than five minutes. But when Ms Thornton reached the sea there was no sign of Jodi and Tom.

Mr Loughlin said he and Ms Thornton scoured the beach for two hours searching for the children before calling police.

Asked by the coroner why they did not summon help sooner, he said: "We both felt they had got lost somewhere on the beach. It's a very large beach."

The coroner heard evidence that the tide swept in with unusual swiftness on that day. The Coastguard sector officer, David Thiel, said the day had marked the top of the spring tide.

"The low water was lower than average and the high water higher than average, so the tide would come in quicker that day than normal."

He said the beach was undulating with sandbars running parallel to it. The two children could easily have got out of their depth and swept into one of these channels.

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news

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Golf club drives 'out adopted boy in family match

MICHAEL STREETER

A decision by a golf club to ban a 13-year-old boy from competing in a family event because he is adopted could cause the teenager distress and damage his self-esteem, experts warned yesterday.

Laurie Briggs and his adoptive mother were banned from the annual family foursomes event at Burhill Golf Club, near Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, after a complaint that he was not a blood relative.

His mother Audrey Briggs, a former Welsh golfing champion, and her husband Laurie, who live in West Kirby, Cheshire, were then informed by the club that the event was only open to natural sons and daughters. Mrs Briggs said: "I am very upset about the whole thing and we are hoping that the club will change its mind."

Laurie was adopted at the age of three months by the Briggs from a Brazilian mother who wanted her child adopted abroad. He has become a keen sportsman playing cricket, football and his main love golf. He knows of the adoption but regards Mrs Briggs as his mother.

The British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering said

they were "disappointed" by the club's action, and warned that it was potentially damaging because adopted children were particularly prone to feelings of rejection and low self-esteem.

Spokeswoman Leigh Chambers added: "Instances such as this can reinforce those feelings and single the children out as being different. This can be stressful and upsetting to all concerned as well as insulting to the adoptive parents who are providing their children with a loving home."

Mrs Briggs and her son had reached the third round of the family foursomes event, but then another competitor complained that Laurie should not be allowed to take part.

The club secretary, Dick Richards, wrote to the Briggs saying that the conditions of entry for the competition stated it was open to only mother and fathers with natural sons and daughters. The letter said: "On the entry form you received you will see that step-children are not permitted and it is my error that adopted children did not feature on the form; this will be corrected for next year."

In a further letter, the club captain said: "Your deep disappointment touches me greatly."

Middle-class woman 'planted embassy bomb'

A Palestinian planted the car bomb that rocked the Israeli embassy in London in an attempt to de-rail the Israeli-Arab peace initiative, a jury at the Old Bailey was told yesterday. Nada Zekra, 49, was a member of a group of middle-class Palestinians based in London, David Calvert-Smith, for the prosecution, said.

The group believed that Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, "was misguided in his attempts to come to any accommodation with Israel and wished to hinder the process", Mr Calvert-Smith said.

The bomb was set off in July 1994 after the Jewish leader Yitzhak Rabin and King Hussein of Jordan had signed the Washington peace declaration. It shattered the windows of every house, shop and car within a radius of a few hundred yards. People inside the buildings and outside on the street were thrown to the ground. Substantial debris flew through the air as far as 300 yards or so. Damage to the embassy, in Kensington Palace Gardens, was £5m or more.

The bomb was in the back boot of an Audi which had been parked as close as possible to the embassy. Mr Calvert-Smith said that it was left there by Zekra, of West Kensington, west London. She denies causing an explosion.

The prosecution alleges that another woman and two men in the dock with her had taken part in the "planning and manufacture" of the bomb and of a second bomb which exploded the following day outside the offices of a Jewish charity.

Samar Alami, 30, of South Kensington, Jawad Bouthen,

The case continues.

DAILY POEM

Brief Lives

By Olive Senior

Gardening in the Tropics, you never know what you'll turn up. Quite often, bones. In some places they say when volcanoes erupt, they spew out dense and monumental as stones the skulls of desaparecidos – the disappeared ones. Mine is only a kitchen garden so I unearth just occasional skeletons. The latest was of a young man from the country who lost his way and crossed the invisible boundary into rival political territory. I buried him again so he can carry on growing. Our cemeteries are thriving too. The newest addition was the drug baron wiped out in territorial competition who had this stunning funeral complete with twenty-one-gun salute and attended by everyone, especially the young girls famed for the vivacity of their dress, their short skirts and even briefest lives.

The feather in the cap of National Poetry Day on Thursday is the publication of *Emergency Kit: Poems for Strange Times*, edited by Jo Shapcott and Matthew Sweeney and published by Faber. It is easily the sharpest and the wittiest anthology of recent years and a brilliant introduction to poetry from the English-speaking world in the post-war era. This poem by Olive Senior, who was born in Jamaica in 1943, was first published in *Gardening in the Tropics* by Bloodaxe in 1986.



Cold snap: Members of the Birmingham Royal Ballet dancing *Les Patineurs*, one of a trio of works with a wintry flavour that they will be performing on their national tour which opens today at the Alhambra

Photograph: Laune Lewis

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international

Dole's TV wit lacks razor edge

The Republican challenger's first face-to-face with Bill Clinton failed to sway voters, writes Rupert Cornwell

Washington - By common consent, Bob Dole did not come close to landing a really bruising blow in the first of his two campaign debates with President Bill Clinton. But his graceful, witty and competent performance may have achieved his minimum objective of persuading voters to give his plodding candidacy a second look.

For 90 minutes in Hartford, Connecticut, on Sunday evening, watched by the largest national television audience until election night on 5 November, the President and his Republican challenger set out their differences on issues ranging from foreign policy, crime and education to the economy and Whitewater. The tone was unfailingly civil. Far ahead in the polls, the President needed only to avoid disaster and easily did so.

Mr Dole, with a string of trademark sardonic one-liners, provided most of the humour. But twice he declined opportunities to wade in against Mr Clinton on the "character issue" - shorthand for broken election promises, a gamut of White House mini-scandals, Whitewater and his supposed personal peccadilloes - where the President is most vulnerable.

Afterwards, an array of instant polls, "debate-meters" and sundry other pseudoscientific devices wheeled out by the networks picked up scant change in the overall picture. In one, by CBS, 96 per cent claimed that what they had seen would make no difference to their vote. Asked to select a "winner" and a "loser", those questioned gave Mr Clinton victory by 15 or 20 points, about the same lead as he enjoys in most opinion polls.

But hints of hope do remain for Mr Dole. One is that three out of four voters considered he had done "better than expected"; more encouraging still, perhaps, a quarter of the electorate still says it might change its mind. For Republicans this is proof that while the President's support might be broad, it is not deep.

Hoping to build on his debate showing, Mr Dole is stealing a leaf from the Clinton campaign book with his own two-day bus tour through the crucial swing-state of New Jersey, hammering Mr Clinton's failure to deliver the middle-class tax-cut he promised in 1992, and promoting his own 15-per-cent across-the-board reduction.

"Bob Dole keeps his word," he repeated, mantra-like, at Toms River, 60 miles south of New York City. Alongside him stood Christine Todd Whitman, New Jersey's popular Republican

THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS '96

Governor, whose tax cuts have made her an ideological poster-girl of the party. Even so, Mr Dole is trails Mr Clinton by 15 points or more in New Jersey, one of a group of industrial states he virtually must carry if he is to win the White House.

Mr Clinton was holding rallies in Maine and New Hampshire, part of a north-east he seems set to sweep. If trends hold, Mr Dole will lose in every state between Canada and the Virginia border, representing 127 electoral-college votes of the 270 required to win. But, however daunting the mountain their candidate must climb, Republican spokesmen hailed Sunday as the dawn of a "new day", a sign that the dynamic of the race is about to change.

The debate's format of separate responses to a moderator - the much-respected but low-key Jim Lehrer of PBS - permitted no direct give-and-take between the candidates. But Mr Dole did go some way towards banishing the scowling, "mean" image which has dogged his career. And shaking loose his reputation as a wretched public speaker, he smiled constantly and told good jokes.

"I don't know if everyone's better off than four years ago," he remarked at one point, "but the President certainly is and so is Saddam Hussein." Then Mr Dole delivered a crack at liberal tax-and-spend Democrats. "Let me tax your memories," Mr Dole said he began a Senate-floor speech once - only for Senator Edward Kennedy to leap to his feet: "Why haven't we thought of that before?"

For the rest however, the two men mostly traded selective statistics to illustrate their points; Mr Clinton to buttress his claims that the economy was stronger than in decades, his opponent to claim that, despite the surge on Wall Street and the tumbling budget deficit, ordinary Americans were more fearful for their future than ever.

But for most analysts here, Mr Dole has yet to fulfil the central task of a challenger - of explaining why an incumbent who has made no egregious blunders should be ejected from office. Had he won the debate, he was asked afterwards, "No," came candidate Dole's typically laconic, self-deprecating reply, "I don't know. We showed up."

Given the low expectations beforehand, just showing up may have been a feat. Whether it is enough to turn the tide, however, is another matter.



Stand and deliver: Bob Dole (left) and Bill Clinton in action during their campaign debate

Photograph: Reuter

significant shorts

Swiss Bank to fight £13bn Jewish claim

Switzerland's biggest bank ruled out an out-of-court settlement of a \$20bn (£13bn) lawsuit filed in New York by a Holocaust survivor who says Swiss banks may be hiding her family's wealth.

The Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) vowed to fight the class-action suit, which claims Swiss banks withheld accounts from the heirs of Jews murdered in the Holocaust. The suit was filed last week in Brooklyn federal court by Gisella Weissbach, 66, on behalf of all heirs of Holocaust victims who had deposited money and property in various Swiss banks for safe-keeping as Nazi terror spread over Europe. Reuter - Zurich

South Korea claims 'spy' is a missionary

South Korea said a US citizen held in North Korea on spy charges was a China-based missionary, and denied allegations that he was working for a Holocaust survivor who says Swiss banks may be hiding her family's wealth. The Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) vowed to fight the class-action suit, which claims Swiss banks withheld accounts from the heirs of Jews murdered in the Holocaust. The suit was filed last week in Brooklyn federal court by Gisella Weissbach, 66, on behalf of all heirs of Holocaust victims who had deposited money and property in various Swiss banks for safe-keeping as Nazi terror spread over Europe. Reuter - Zurich

Belgian PM to step down

The Belgian Prime Minister, Jean-Luc Dehaene, will not make a bid for a third term. *De Standard* newspaper said, "After two mandates, one has probably given the



best one has." Mr Dehaene said, "In one's own interest, it is best to stop then." Mr Dehaene became prime minister in March 1992, and started his second term in June 1995. In 1994, he narrowly lost a bid to become president of the European Commission because of a veto by John Major, who considered him too pro-European. Reuter - Brussels

China charges dissident

Chinese prosecutors have charged the dissident and former student leader, Wang Dan with plotting to overthrow the government. Chinese sources said. A court in Peking was expected to deliver a verdict on Mr Wang's case this week, said one source. At the same time, the authorities said the sole surviving member of the notorious Gang of Four, led by Jiang Qing, the wife of Chairman Mao Zedong, had been freed after serving a 20-year term for subversive crimes. Yao Wenyuan, 64, was arrested on 6 October, 1976. Reuter - Peking

Medical tests for the Pope

The Pope, described as a "good patient" with a strong heart, completed a battery of medical tests ahead of the appendix surgery which has unleashed a flurry of speculation about the true state of his health. The Vatican and doctors confirmed the operation would take place today. Reuter - Rome

Zulus pull out of SA talks

Zulu nationalists again pulled out of constitutional negotiations, one week after ending their 18-month boycott of the assembly drafting South Africa's blue print for all-race democracy. An Inkatha Freedom Party negotiator said his party had failed to reach agreement with the majority ANC a dispute over how closely local governments should adhere to traditional tribal structure. AP - Cape Town

Deadline for UAE aliens

More than 144,000 illegal workers have left the United Arab Emirates ahead of a new law cracking down on unlawful foreign labour, an Interior Minister spokesman said. The spokesman urged all others to leave by the end of October, the deadline the government had set for illegal aliens to leave or legalise their stay. Reuter - Dubai

Old amber to reveal secrets

Amber found in the mountains of Lebanon has been confirmed as the oldest in the world, dating back 125 million years, and insects trapped in it could lead to scientific advances, a Lebanese scientist said. The amber also contains plants far older than those found in Baltic amber which dates back 35 million years. Professor Georges Jouanne, head of Lebanon's National Council for Scientific Research said. Reuter - Bangalore

Top guard for Miss World

The Miss World beauty contest in India next month will be guarded by crack commandos and around 1,000 policemen, the police chief in Bangalore said. The leader of a populist group had threatened to set alight the show's venue, and activists from the Mahila Jagarnam (Forum to Awaken Women) have threatened that one of the group will commit suicide on each of the 17 days leading up to the pageant, on 23 November. Reuter - Bangalore

Latinos flex political muscle

TEXAS TALES

Elaine Davenport on her state's build-up to the poll

AUSTIN — "Register to Vote" was heard last weekend all over East Austin, home of the city's Latino community. Volunteers from the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project went door-to-door and sat at tables outside Catholic churches and supermarkets in the 80F sunshine.

The effort was part of Latino Vote USA, a national campaign to register 1 million new voters for the 5 November election by last Sunday's deadline. The campaigners also spread the word about the first-ever major Latino march on Washington DC, to take place on 12

October. Tens of thousands of Latinos from across the country are expected to deliver the message that their numbers are growing and that Latinos matter.

There was emphasis last weekend not only on voters-to-be, but also on those already registered, who were asked to sign a pledge to go out and vote.

The pledge card was added in recognition of the difference a large Latino turnout could make in a state where they make up 28 per cent of the population and are expected to outnumber Anglos as the majority ethnic group by 2010.

"We see we have some power this time," Robert Donley, a member of the Southwest Voter steering committee, said. He refers to the growing number of Latinos in Texas, the growing number registered to vote, and the probability that the race for the US Senate between Victor Morales, the Latino name highest on all Texas ballots, and Phil Gramm, a Republican, will bring a record number to the polls.

The frosting on the cake is national influence. Since Latinos tend to vote Democrat, a large turnout may alter whether

a big chunk of electoral votes for president goes to Bob Dole or Bill Clinton, who are in dead heat in the Texas polls. The Democrats have not carried the presidential vote in Texas since Jimmy Carter won in 1976, but while Mr Clinton does not need the state to win re-election, it is a must for Mr Dole.

The race is between Mr Morales, the teacher who came from nowhere with no money and campaigned in a little white pick-up truck to win the Democratic nomination, and Mr Gramm, who has been Senator for 12 years. Early this year, Mr Gramm was sent running back to Texas with his tail between his legs after caucuses in Iowa and Louisiana rejected his "I-want-to-be-President" attempt and he was forced to pull out in New Hampshire.

Mr Morales, who is billed as David vs Goliath, Senior Senator Go to Washington, or Don Quixote in a pick-up truck, has enjoyed the national spotlight during his rise to prominence. He beat two incumbent congressmen to get the nomination, spoke at the Democratic National Convention and spent a dry last month with Mr Clinton on his Texas tour.

No poll has been released since.

New Zealand's PM fights for survival as opposition rises spectacularly in polls

DAVID BARBER
Wellington

New Zealand moved into the final stage of a historic election campaign at the weekend with the Prime Minister, Jim Bolger, and his conservative National Party, who have governed for the last six years, fighting for survival.

With the latest opinion polls showing support for Helen Clark and the main opposition Labour Party rising spectacularly, Mr Bolger's party was hoping for an Oscar-winning performance in last night's nationwide television leaders debate to put him back in the running for a third three-year term.

Ms Clark dominated the first debate 11 days ago and has gone from strength to strength since with leading analysts and commentators tipping her to lead a centre-left coalition after next Saturday's election.

Mr Bolger has conducted a

lacklustre campaign and although the National Party easily heads the polls, an absolute majority seems out of reach and its potential coalition partners are struggling to reach the 5 per cent voting threshold needed to guarantee seats in Parliament.

The election will be New Zealand's first under the German-style mixed-member proportional (MMP) system which will give minor parties more MPs in the expanded 120-seat House of Representatives and almost certainly produce a strange coalition government.

Ms Clark's future as New Zealand's first female prime minister is not, however, assured. She will have to reach a coalition agreement with the nationalist New Zealand First party and govern with the sup-

port of the left-wing NZ Alliance. Two major opinion polls at the weekend showed the three parties sharing 73 seats in the next Parliament, against 46 for National and one for its coalition partners United NZ. Labour would be the dominant partner with 33 to 37 seats.

The Alliance has ruled out joining any formal coalition after the election but its leader, Jim Anderton, has said it would give Labour conditional support in exchange for adapting some Alliance policies.

The three parties have major policy differences and have bitterly attacked each other on the hustings but they share one common objective - ousting the National Party government. Ms Clark's credibility as potential leader of this disparate group was undermined last week by former Labour prime minister David Lange, who has retired from politics. He said there was no way the three parties could work together: "There's too much hatred, there's too much baggage and ill-will, there's too much history and there's too much madness."

Ms Clark dubbed him "irrelevant", but his comments were seen as hurting Labour, which is trying to position itself as a united party, fit to lead a consensus government.

Mr Bolger's best chance of hanging on would be as leader of a minority National government if the others could not reach a coalition agreement. This would almost certainly be a caretaker arrangement, pending another election early next year.

The kingmaker after next Saturday is likely to be Winston Peters, a former National Party cabinet minister sacked by Mr Bolger, who now leads NZ First. Polls indicate that a National-NZ First coalition would have a majority, but Mr Peters has stepped up his attacks on the National Party and would not work with Mr Bolger.

With polls indicating that health and education are the main issues for voters, following widespread dissatisfaction with the government's policies, Mr Bolger has campaigned on the need for continuity to maintain New Zealand's economic recovery. He has increasingly used scare tactics, predicting that a centre-left coalition would raise taxes, push up interest rates and inflation, drive off foreign investors and provoke "the crash of '97".

If it happens, you'll wake up the morning after, put your head in your hands and weep 'Sunday, bloody Sunday,'" he said last week.

The tactic backfired when the stock market rose, some having dropped interest rates and the New York-based agency Standard and Poor's said that it was relaxed about a Labour-led government and would not downgrade New Zealand's credit rating.

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international

Far East: A territorial dispute inspires patriotic fervour in Hong Kong and Taiwan, but fails to stir the emotions in Japan

China's latent loathing erupts in island spat

STEPHEN VINES
Hong Kong

Such is the fervour now surrounding the Sino-Japanese dispute over sovereignty of a small group of islands known by the Chinese as the Diaoyus and by Japan as the Senkakus, that the smallest symbolic victory is being hailed as a great achievement.

Yesterday a handful of Chinese protesters managed to make a brief landing on the Japanese-controlled islands. There they raised the flags of both China and Taiwan before rushing to rejoin a 50-strong flotilla which set off from Taiwan with about 300 Taiwanese, Hong Kong and Macau Chinese patriots, intent on making a symbolic gesture of Chinese sovereignty over the islands.

Si Cai, a Taiwan government spokesman, hailed the landing as an "act of patriotism to protect our land". In Hong Kong, legislators rushed to praise the "heroes" of the brief excursion in the East China Sea.

The Diaoyus have become an extraordinarily powerful nationalist rallying point for Chinese people outside China - where the government is keeping a lid on demonstrations, fearing that spontaneous displays of na-

tionalist emotion may spill over into other forms of protest.

In a weekend radio broadcast the Hong Kong legislator Fung Kin-kee said that "the tiny Diaoyu islands have woken us up from our sweet dreams". He was referring to the dream that China had "regained its political muscle" and did not need to "tolerate any snub by foreign superpowers".

Although they are uninhabited, the Diaoyus are a reminder of America's global power: Washington handed the islands to Japan in 1972 as part of a package concerning the return of Okinawa, which was then occupied by US forces.

After major protests, the issue lay dormant until last July when a group of Japanese nationalists established a symbolic lighthouse and a Japanese flag on one of the islands in order to re-assert Japanese sovereignty.

Since then protests have intensified, particularly in Hong Kong where there have been unprecedented displays of patriotic fervour. Schools throughout the territory observed a one-minute silence to protest against the Japanese occupation of the islands; the use of their Japanese name by the colony's Chief Secretary, Anson Chan, triggered an avalanche of protests, and a disc jockey took an overdose after being showered with abuse for suggesting some of the money spent on protests could have been better used.

The protests intensified after they claimed their first martyr. David Chan, a former television journalist and aspiring politician drowned after attempting to swim towards the islands after the first flotilla set sail. Chan, hitherto a despised political opportunist, had many of the colony's leading political figures at his funeral over the weekend, and his death spurred the largest rally since the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests.

A survey of people aged between 15 and 29, published yesterday, showed that half of them believed that the Diaoyu



Making waves: A fishing boat, flying the Taiwan flag, is surrounded by Japanese coastguards off one of the disputed Diaoyu Islands. Photograph: AP

BT cut 21% off weekend calls to India and Pakistan.



Nationalists win scant regard on streets of Tokyo

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
Tokyo

Every other day or so, the crowded streets of Tokyo are transformed by a terrifying ap- parition. It comes in the form of black vans, driven at a snail's pace along some of the city's busiest roads, and manned by grim-faced men dressed in quasi-military uniforms. The trucks are mounted with loudspeakers, and from them comes ear-splitting martial music interspersed with incomprehensible slogans.

The black vans, screened by wire mesh and decorated with Rising Sun flags and angry Japanese characters, look and sound like demonic ice cream vans. But most remarkable is the behaviour of the ordinary Japanese: despite the unbearable noise.

The government prefers not to discuss the issue of the islands

able din, the bizarre spectacle, and the traffic jams, nobody pays the vans the slightest attention.

These are the vans of the *yakuza*, the representatives of Japan's ultra-nationalist right wing, and the reaction they provoke on the streets of Tokyo exemplifies their status in the country as a whole. Ever since its wartime defeat, Japan has had a small, and absurdly vociferous, far-right. It loathes an assortment of enemies: principally communists, and those who denigrate Japan's wartime occupation of large parts of Asia. Many of its adherents have links with the *yakuza*, or organised crime syndicates.

But rather than denouncing them, embracing them, or even just laughing at them, most Japanese prefer simply to pretend that they are not there.

The tendency has been particularly noticeable in the last few weeks, during the escalating squabble over the small group of islands in the East China Sea called, in Japanese, the

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international

The damning truth written on the pages of Document No. 3206

BACK TO BOSNIA

After one year of peace, Robert Fisk continues his journey in the former Yugoslavia. His second report tells of betrayal at Srebrenica by UN 'protectors'

The official orders to the United Nations' Dutch battalion to protect the Muslim refugees of Srebrenica still exist. Marked "Most Immediate - Restricted", and signed by General H Gobilliard, the acting commander of the UN's "Protection Force" in Bosnia, they were sent to Colonel Tom Kerremans in the Serb-surrounded enclave at 18.27 hours on 11 July last year.

"Enter into local negotiations with BSA [Bosnian Serb Army] forces for immediate ceasefire," Gobilliard ordered. "Giving up any weapons and military equipment is not authorised and is not a point of discussion."

The document – File No. 3206 in the official UN log, which has been obtained by *The Independent* – is a fearful reminder to the survivors of the Western world's betrayal. "Take all reasonable [sic] measures to protect refugees and civilians in your care," the orders go on. "Continue with all possible means to defend your forces and installation from attack. This is to include the use of close air support if necessary. Be prepared to receive and co-ordinate delivery of medical and other relief supplies to refugees."

Hassan Nuhanovic smiles with grim cynicism as he reads through the orders. As a survivor, he knew what happened next. The only orders the Dutch obeyed were a vain request for air support and the instruction to open negotiations with the Serbs, washed down with a bottle of mess champagne.

The Dutch quickly surrendered their weapons, their armoured vehicles, even their uniforms. Not a single "reasonable measure" – save for a few worthless pleas for humanitarian behaviour – came from Kerremans. There was no defence. The Serbs were allowed to hunt through the UN's headquarters at Potocari for Muslims they had not already taken off for the slaughter. There was no medical aid. Hassan's mother and father and younger brother were ordered out of the UN compound by Dutch officers, never to be seen again.

Hassan, who was saved only because he was one of five official UN interpreters, still waits for them, ignoring the evidence of the mass graves and the terrible rumours he now picks up

as a UN translator in central Bosnia. His mother Nasiba, he was told, was imprisoned in Vlasinica and later executed. His father was beaten. His brother simply disappeared. But like all the Srebrenica survivors, he is obsessed with the idea that hundreds of Muslims still hide in the remote canyons of Serb-held eastern Bosnia, high above the snow-line in winter, in caves and ravines, feeding off berries and wild animals. "My life's work is to find out what happened to the missing, to keep their names alive – I think of my parents and brother every minute. They are still with me."

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has published a glossy volume listing the names of 14,561 men, women and children who "disappeared" in the Bosnian war, the largest number of them from Srebrenica; in this martyrology volume, Hassan's family can be found on page 240, their places of birth, father's name and location at time of disappearance noted in a single line. It shows that Hassan's missing brother Muhammed was just 21 when the Dutch ordered him out of their headquarters. Thumbing through the ICRC's 342 pages and you realise why you mock the dead if you claim that the war is over. Of the more than 14,000 "missing", 12,271 are Muslims, 1,519 Serbs and 432 Croats. It is not a volume that the Dutch army are likely to display in their official museum.

Nor are they likely to treasure the incredible Serb document,



Picking up the pieces: An elderly Bosnian Serb woman searches among the rubble for her belongings in a village north of Srebrenica (Photograph: AP)

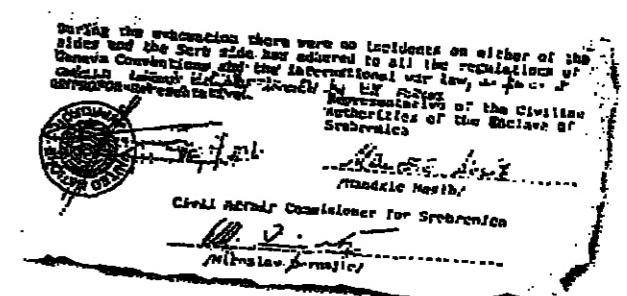
NO UNFORCE DOCUMENTS	
REF ID: 3206/03	
DOC NUMBER:	3206/03
DOC. SUBJECT:	PROT. NO. 13123799 P.D.P. 2304
INFO. ORIGINATOR:	PROT. NO. 13123799 ACTORS COMMISSIONED BY UN PROTECTION FORCE PERIOD: 11 JULY 1996
RECIPIENT:	UNPROFOR
FAX NO.:	031 222 777
ACTOR: COMMANDER, CO. 10	CO. 10
ACTOR: COMMANDER, CO. 13	CO. 13
EXTRAS: INFO. COMMANDER, CO. 13	
INFO.:	
SUBJECT:	ORDERS FOR DEFENCE OF VILLAGES AND PROTECTION OF REFUGEES IN SREBRENICA
URGENCY:	

In view of the situation in Srebrenica the following are the main points of the document. The document is confidential and the disclosure of its contents is prohibited by law.

A. Return home local population with UN forces for immediate ceasefire. Giving up any weapons and military equipment is not authorized and is not a point of discussion.

Take all reasonable measures to protect civilians and refugees in your care, the Dutch commander was told ... soon

Serbs were hunting the UN headquarters for Muslims they had not yet taken away for slaughter



"Franken wrote down the names of 239 males in the UN compound who were between 16 and 65 and told the Serbs he would send the list to the ICRC and New York in the hope that this would keep them alive," Hassan says. "The Serbs were angry and Franken stuffed the list in his underclothes. But when I reached Zagreb with UN troops, the list was missing and the Dutch government claimed it didn't exist. Only when a human-rights group forced them to hand it over did we see it again. But of course, in the weeks that had passed, most of

the people on the list had been executed. The Dutch could have saved their lives if they'd published the list the moment their soldiers were released."

It is difficult to contradict Hassan. His family's fate has proved of no interest to a world convinced that flawed elections have ended the Bosnian war. His war – of endless hope and duty for a family probably long dead – goes on.

Tomorrow: In the third of the series, Robert Fisk reports from Banja Luka on the tragedy of a woman forced to identify the body of her son by his clothing.

Long and winding road that opens up an isolated enclave

A new link with formerly besieged Gorazde is almost complete

haves caused that boundary to crystallise. Without a route avoiding Serb territory, Gorazde will remain effectively isolated. However, there is still no agreement on how the promised "highway" is to be paid for and built.

Given the acutely sensitive nature of the task, I-For has felt obliged to build a route, which has proved an immense task, though still well short of what Dayton promised. Two I-For engineers, one French, one Romanian, have died in accidents.

Brigadier John Moore-Bick, the British chief engineer, says the aim of the track is simply to permit access to the route along which the bigger road will eventually run.

Even so, it has proved an immense undertaking, far bigger than route triangle in central Bosnia, which British engineers turned from a goat

blasted away to make passing places every 200 to 300 metres.

After Delni, another ruined hamlet, Bosnian engineers are at work, still apparently under the impression that this is the final road. The US government has provided \$2.25m (£1.5m) to fund this part of the road.

The last section of the new road runs from Jabuka to Ustikolina, where German engineers are at work.

At Donji Bratnje, 15 kilometres before Gorazde, they have had to rebuild bridges destroyed by Nato bombing in last summer's air attacks.

In all, the engineers have now

built 250 culverts – to channel mountain streams across the track and avoid washing it away – 15 bridges and shifted 105,000 tons of rock and gravel.

"It was only meant to be a track," said Brigadier Moore-Bick. "But until something else is decided upon, it looks very much like the road. This at least is what the Bosnians believe they are building."

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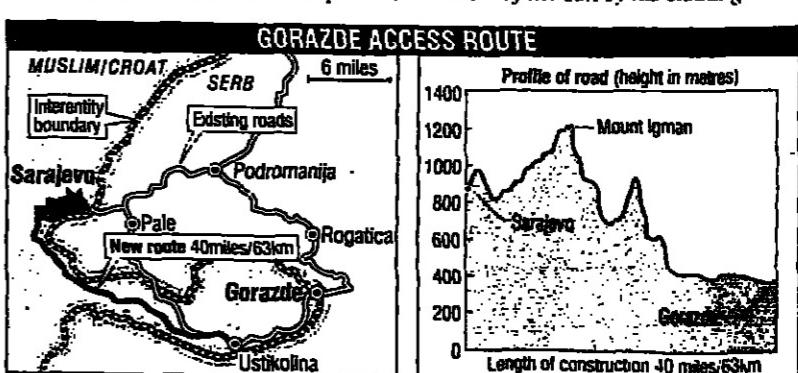
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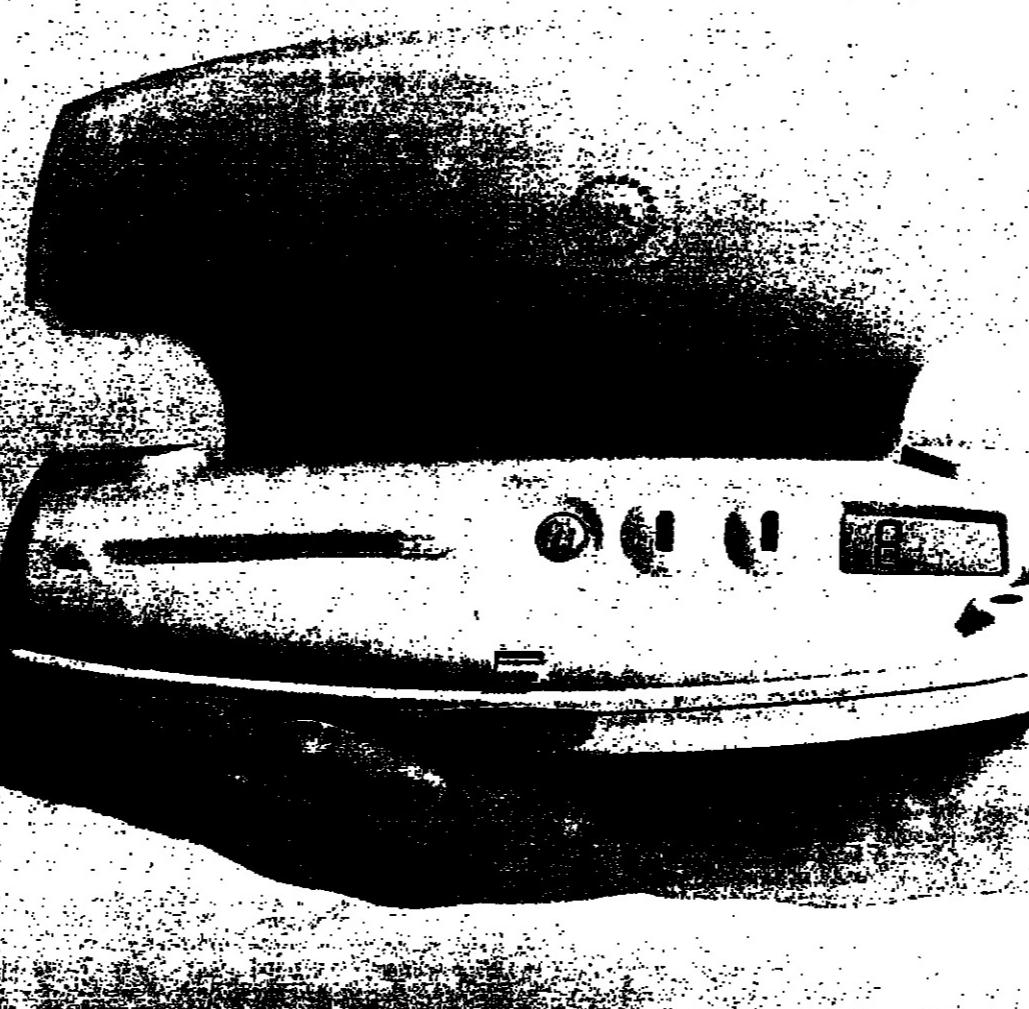
All you do is open up the small hand held monitor each morning.

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showing it means you're free to make love without contraceptives. If there's a red light

Available at  showing you can either avoid sex, or use a barrier method (such as a condom). Occasionally a yellow light will show.

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obituaries / gazette

Lord Colnbrook

When she became leader of the Conservative Party in 1975 Margaret Thatcher retained the services of Humphrey Atkins as her Chief Whip. There were two reasons for this. First, he had done an excellent job over the two years he had already been in the post. And second – contrary to the expectations of both the main camps – he had been studiously neutral in the leadership battle.

When, however, in 1979, after the murder of Airey Neave, and her general-election victory of that year, she made Atkins Secretary of State for Northern Ireland – a province with which he had but the most slender of acquaintances – the eyebrows of her entourage climbed towards their hairlines. But the memory of his attitude in 1975 persisted and, even if he were a closet Heathite, the Ulster job would keep him (as it later did Jim Prior) well away from central decision-making on government policy. Later, in 1981, he was moved to the Foreign Office, where his ministerial career came to an end in controversial and turbulent circumstances.

Humphrey Atkins was born in 1922, the son of a Kenyan farmer who had served in the Indian Army. In 1925, after his father's untimely and gruesome death (he was gored by a rhinoceros) he returned to England, where his mother had him enrolled at Wellington. In 1940 he joined the Royal Navy, serving first in the battleship *Nelson*, mostly on convoy protection duty; he sailed the dangerous Atlantic route, and also the less dangerous, but still threatening, route from home waters to Gibraltar.

He fell in love with a Wren, Margaret Spencer-Nairn. Like

many young couples of that time, when death was never very far away, they decided to snatch as much happiness as they could, though war still raged. In 1944, therefore, Atkins married a highly political wife, and formed an alliance with her prosperous linoleum manufacturing family; the war over, Margaret's father took him into the business, and she set about fully awakening his fairly dormant Tory political instincts.

Initially, Atkins saw himself as a trained businessman interested in politics, rather than a politician in his own right. It was in that capacity that he worked for J. Henderson Stewart in East Fife during the general election campaign of 1950. But the political bug took hold of him, and he began the usual journey of aspiring Conservative politicians: he sought to prove his mettle by contesting an unwinnable seat in 1951. This was West Lothian, and the young naval lieutenant and linoleum salesman (as he used, in later years, humorously to describe himself) made a dent in the Labour majority: this was important, demonstrating to Conservative Constitutive Associations in more electorally desirable parts of the kingdom that he was good on the hustings.

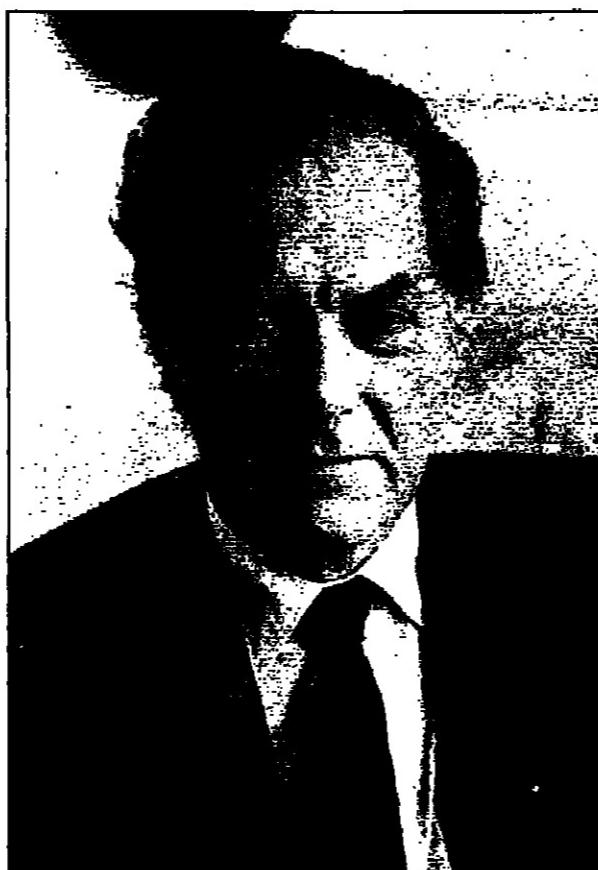
For the 1955 general election he was adopted for Merton and Morden and won the seat he was to hold until boundary changes forced a shift in 1970 to Spelthorne in Surrey ("a most socially agreeable place", he used to say), which constituency he represented until his departure for the House of Lords in 1987, where he took the title Lord Colnbrook.

Initially, Atkins was different in the House of Commons. He took nine months to make his maiden speech, although

Speakers of the House are traditionally indulgent of young members anxious to blood themselves. Once he began, however, he began to make a name for himself – particularly by his support for the retention of capital punishment. He enjoyed (if that is the right word) a period as a Parliamentary Private Secretary – the lowest form of ministerial life – but in 1967 the then Chief Whip, William Whitelaw, invited him to join the Whips' office, where he shone.

Whips are generally – and rightly – supposed to be a combination of the bully and the charmer. Some few are wholly one, or wholly the other. Edward Heath, a highly successful Chief Whip, was wholly a bully. Atkins' boss, Whitelaw, who was also highly successful, oscillated, often alarmingly, between bluff charm and bad temper. Atkins was all charm and reason, and the backbenchers whom he so often had to cajole into supporting the official party line, both liked and respected him, for they sensed the core of determination that lay beneath his agreeable suavity.

He was made Deputy Chief Whip upon the Conservative return to power in 1970, under Francis Pym, and took the top job in 1973. But his greatest moment was as Deputy in October 1971 when, for Heath's benefit, he predicted the Conservative vote on the question of British entry into the European Economic Community to within one. "And the one I got wrong," he said later, "was an awkward bugger anyway." Since the question of entry into the EEC was to be decided, on the Conservative side, on a free vote – something whips, naturally, hate – Atkins's



Colnbrook: a nearly man
Photograph: Hulton Getty

judgement was remarkably sound.

From thereon in, however, his career was a far less happy one. As Chief Whip between 1975 and 1979 he had to strive hard to reconcile the differences between warring factions in his party. There were, on the one hand, those enthused by Margaret Thatcher, and the storm of fresh air she brought to politics; and there were, on the other, those embittered, not only by

her overthrowing of Edward Heath, but by the reversal of the policies on which the Tories had fought, unsuccessfully, both the 1974 general elections. In 1979 he thought of his accession to the Northern Ireland Office as something of a relief.

It was not to prove so. His

two-year period in Ulster saw the murder of Lord Mountbatten, and the notorious IRA hunger strikes in the Maze prison. The former event had,

at least, the desirable effect of making the Dublin government of the day more amenable on co-operation in matters of security. The latter provoked probably the most bitter of confrontations between the Westminster government and Irish nationalism that had yet been seen. Initially, Atkins' whip's instinct suggested to him that a compromise should be sought; but once the Prime Minister made reluctantly clear that she would in no circumstances grant political privileges to those in prison for civil offences, he rallied, and showed a will as strong as her own. Eleven deaths later, the hunger strike was called off.

Atkins's time in Belfast revealed some of his deficiencies. The social graces that endeared him to almost all quarters in Westminster found no purchase in Northern Irish political society. "We could rub along right with Willie Whitelaw, William Craig, one of the hardest of Ulster Unionists, once said to me, "because he's a genuine square. But this fella's only a pretend square."

It was true that Atkins's generous, but slightly flamboyant hospitality, and his somewhat overpowering sense of good manners, cut little ice in the rough and tumble of Ulster politics. It was with relief that, in 1981, he moved to what he thought would be the tranquil pastures of the Foreign Office, where he was to be Deputy to the Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, and the office's spokesman in the House of Commons.

Throughout 1981 Argentinian pressure on the Falkland Islands mounted. The Foreign Office was guilty of gross carelessness in its conduct of affairs up to the crisis. Though he was never to hold ministerial office again Atkins continued to be active in politics. He had never lost his interest in defence matters, and he became a first-class chairman of the Select Committee on Defence. There was a move to make him Speaker of the House of Commons, in spite of the shadow of the Falklands debacle.

While some demurred at the thought of a failed minister in

the chair, others pointed out that Selwyn Lloyd, who had led to the House over the Suez Canal adventure in 1956, had gone on to become an excellent Speaker. However, it was not to be, and Atkins had to content himself with his Defence Committee, and later with the Presidency of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations, the principal job on the voluntary wing of the party.

Atkins was a nearly man. His gifts, as an orator and as a political tactician, were considerable. But misfortune and misjudgement dogged him at every turn, just when he was nearing the top of affairs. He was, however, a staunch patriot, and a loyal party man as well as being a good friend to many people. That is not an unworthy accolade.

Patrick Cosgrave

Humphrey Edward Gregory Atkins, politician; born Kenya 12 August 1922; MP (Conservative) for Merton and Morden, Surrey 1955-70, Spelthorne 1970-87; PPS to Civil Lord of the Admiralty 1959-62; Hon Secretary, Conservative Parliamentary Defence Committee 1965-67; Opposition Whip 1967-70; Treasurer of HM Household and Deputy Chief Whip 1970-73; PC 1973; Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury and Government Chief Whip 1973-74; Opposition Chief Whip 1974-79; Secretary of State for Northern Ireland 1979-81; Lord Privy Seal and principal Foreign and Commonwealth Office spokesman in the Commons 1981-82; KCMG 1983; Chairman, Select Committee on Defence 1984-87; created 1987 Baron Colnbrook; married 1944 Margaret Spencer-Nairn (one son, three daughters); died 4 October 1996.

Frances Lang



Lang: quirky and original
Photograph: David Redfern

The picture desk of the *Independent* has always taken on young photographers, often from the Newport School of Art and Design. However, when Frances Lang came up from Wales in 1993, she was not, by instinct, a newspaper photographer. She could not, as her fellow students did, hightail around town "doing" a politician at 11am, a fire at 3pm, an actor in a hotel room at 5pm.

In fact, it took a friend to goad her through the door of the old City Road offices, and the same friend to ring me to say she was in reception. There I found a tall, slender woman wearing ragged men's clothes. She looked so young, so tomboyish, I was taken aback to learn she was 31. That first meeting, she clutched a box of colour Xerox copies of portraits she had taken of women chefs. The rich half-tones of these were almost painterly, but what set them apart was the intimacy of the work, the ease of her subjects. Lang had worked with many of these chefs while waitressing to pay for her photography course. Only an insider could have come away with such images. She caught one bent over an order form, smoking as she worked. The cigarette had a perilously long ash.

Frances Lang's voice cracked with nervousness as she suggested we might run the portraits accompanied by recipes from each of the chefs. This is exactly what the Review section of the *Independent* on Sunday did. The series was given a five-page spread, an unprece-

ntioned first showing for a student. The reaction was overwhelming. It was serialised in Germany, *Vogue Entrainement* in Australia took a follow-on series. Sheila Lukins, author of *The New Basics Cookbook*, the best-selling cookery book in America, took armloads of copies back to New York. Most touchingly, one of the chefs, Margo Clayton, was sent a love letter care of the newspaper. It was scrawled by a dreamy college boy, who declared her picture would be "on my wall forever".

The problem with having made a spectacular début was what to do for an encore. Dispatched by the Review to take a portrait of Sir MacGregor for "How We Met", Lang forgot a key to her lights and blew the job. This, I later learnt, was part of a pattern of triumphs and setbacks, a rhythm of her searching approach to life.

She was born in New Zealand, the youngest of five children of Octavia and Henry

Lang. From 1968 to 1976, when Frances was six to 14, her father was Secretary of the Treasury, a man of great dignity whom she idolised, and whom she desperately hoped to impress. Yet it is a tall order for an aspiring artist to impress the Langs. Her grandfather was the Austrian architect Ernst Pischke, and Lucie Rie was a family friend.

Frances became rebellious. She cut up at school, then, during her twenties, became a heroin addict. The same restless energy made her the first of her group to break free of drugs. Once living in Britain, she was clean, but subject to depression and plagued by a persistent unease, a sense of something she had to do. This something became photography and her concentration on her course in Wales and in her work seemed less a case of ambition than a personal journey.

Following the photo-essay about women chefs in the *Sunday Review*, Frances and I worked regularly together for the *Independent*. We even did a job for *Country Life*, but we weren't asked back. But requesting Frances Lang for a job used to make even *Independent* picture editors edgy. For starters, they couldn't find her during the three years we worked together; she lived hand to mouth, moving from rented digs in Gwent, Bayswater, Notting Hill, Tottenham, South Kensington and Primrose Hill.

Yet when she surfaced, it was almost invariably with new, highly personal work that was quirky, elegant and original.

Emily Green

Frances Sonia Lang, photographer; born Wellington, New Zealand 7 May 1962; married 1996 Mark Brand (died 1996); died near Lima, Peru 1 October 1996.

National Gallery, Kathleen Adler, Peter Blaikie (10), Horace for Hollywood, British Pop Art and America"; **National Portrait Gallery**, Liz Redfern, "The Painted Self-portrait", 1.10pm. **British Museum**: Louise Schofield, "Agamemnon's gold of Mycenae", 1.15pm. **University College London**: Professor Kathleen Ferrier, "We Are Down on Our Knees to the Americans: Anglo-American relations in the 20th century", 5.30pm.

Air Commodore Sir Frank Whittle A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Air Commodore Sir Frank Whittle will be held at Westminster Abbey, London SW1, on Friday 12 October 1996 at 10.30am. Applications for tickets, accompanied by a stamped envelope, should be sent to the Ministry of Defence, Pid (Car) (RAF), Room 344, Adastral House, Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8RU, by not later than Monday 21 October 1996. Applicants should state their connection with Air Commodore Sir Frank Whittle, or the organisation they represent, if applicable. Tickets will be issued 7-10 days before the service. All are welcome. Applications should not be made to Westminster Abbey.

Luncheons Women of Year

Mme Virginie Flimbogadotir, former President of Iceland, was guest of honour at the Women of the Year luncheon, held yesterday at the Savoy Hotel, London WC2. The lunch was held in aid of the Greater London Fund for the Blind.

Lectures Victoria and Albert Museum: Olivia Calica (talk in Italian), "Oggi C'è per l'Europa", 2.30pm.

Guidelines on prisoner release were wrong

Provinces, 1660-1765. This won the Rose Mary Crawshay prize of the British Academy.

From brief work for the League of Nations, Sybil Rosenfeld had the means for a comfortable but never ostentatious independence and, with the Depression, she turned her father's wish that she not take paid work when others needed it more. She always travelled widely and just before the Second World War (when she ran a club for Jewish girls in Paddington) moved into the Bayswater flat where she lived for the rest of her life and which, from 1945, became a centre of change in the status of theatre history.

Such a role was not in her stars. She was born in London, in Bayswater, in 1903, the only child of liberal Jewish parents, her father being one of a family with prosperous ceramics and glass-making interests in Stoke-on-Trent and Czechoslovakia. With cultured parents, her early theatre and opera-going gave her very wide tastes (a lifelong antipathy to *Paradise* being a rare dislike). She went to King's College London, where, aged 19, she took the year's top first class honours degree in English.

Originally drawn towards languages, she met there the young Allardyce Nicoll, a pioneer of English theatre studies, who redirected her interests and she went on to gain an MA, with distinction, for work on the Restoration playwright George Etherege. Her related edition of his *Letterbook* was published in 1928, followed in 1939 by a ground-breaking study, *Strolling Players and Drama in the*

Rosefield was actively involved in the TMA and in the foundation, in 1955-57, of the STR's other offshoot, the International Federation for Theatre Research, for which she sat on the Executive Committee and the editorial board of its journal *Theatre Research*.

Her Foreign Theatrical Companies in Great Britain appeared as an STR pamphlet in 1955, followed by another ground-breaking book, *Theatre of the London Fairs in the 18th Century* (1960).

At this time, with Edward Croft-Murray of the British Museum, she began concentrating on another of her interests, the neglected history of British scene design.

They jointly published a detailed

Checklist of 18th-century British scene-painters (TM, 1964-66),

Rosenfeld going on to write two more pioneering books: *A Short History of Scene Design in Great Britain* (1972) is a sweeping survey showing all her gifts of

economy and clarity as a writer, with *Georgian Scene Painters and Scene Painting* (1982) a detailed study of the 1700-1830 period.

Her *Temples of Thespis* (1978) provides an entertainingly scholarly account of aristocratic Georgian amateur theatricals, and in 1984 she rounded off work begun in the 1930s with a full history of the restored Georgian Theatre at Richmond, Yorkshire, where she also gave a celebratory address in 1993. She was then 90, her birthday having been marked by a reception at the Garrick Club. In 1992 she was made an Honorary Fellow of King's College London.

To the end she was active, alert, encouraging, and contributing to plans for the 50th anniversary of the society she helped found. Some of her last work was on scenic entries for the *New Grove Dictionary of Opera* and, as much devoted to art, architecture and music as theatre, the day before she died saw her casting a vote at the "Living Bridges" show at the Royal Academy, with seats booked for Wednesday's *Uncle Vanya* at the Albery. In the early hours of that morning, and as she always liked things – "without fuss" – this most eminent and unassuming chronicler of British theatre history herself slipped quietly from the stage.

Pieter van der Merwe

Sybil Marion Rosenfeld, theatre historian; born London 20 January 1903; died London 2 October 1996.

Rosenfeld: theatre history
Photograph: Jenny Bissett

sidered separately when making deductions for periods of pre-trial custody in respect of the offences for which those sentences were passed.

It was said that the same approach should be adopted for consecutive sentences. Therefore, each consecutive sentence fell to be reduced by any "relevant period" spent in police detention or while remained in custody in connection with that offence. But section 104(2) provided that:

For the purposes of any reference in this Act . . . to the term of imprisonment or other detention to which a person has been sentenced or which, or part of which, he has served, consecutive terms and terms which are wholly or partly concurrent shall . . . be treated as a single term.

The applicant relied on a line of cases concerned with concurrent sentences, namely *R v Governor of Blundeston Prison, ex p Gaffney* [1982] 1 WLR 696, *R v Home Secretary, ex p Read* [1987] 9 Cr App R (S) 206, *R v Governor of Spital Prison, ex p Mooney* [1996] 1 Cr App R (S) 74, and *R v Home Secretary, ex p Woodward* (unreported, 24 June 1996), in which the Divisional Court adopted a construction which, by concentrating on the words "sentence of imprisonment" in section 104(2) of the 1967 Act (as amended by section 49 of the Police and Crim-

atic Law Report) required concurrent sentences to be considered separately when making deductions for periods of pre-trial custody in respect of the offences for which those sentences were passed.

But his Lordship preferred to adopt the respondent's contention that regard should be had to section 104(2) in this context, so that one looked at the total sentence rather than its individual elements when computing the appropriate reduction for time spent in custody on remand.

Paul Magrath, Barrister

1991-1996



THE Independent Decade



Not for turning: She may have been loved and loathed in equal measure, but Margaret Thatcher still casts a long shadow over our democracy

Photograph: John Voos

A drama with genuine consequences for us all

Ten years ago our politics seemed quite like today's. It wasn't at all. These have been important years for British democracy. But they have also been dominated by one party with one set of characters having one great argument over one issue, Europe. This means that although we have been living through history, it has been easy to misread it as soap opera.

Thus, in 1986, on the day the first issue of *The Independent* went on sale, Westminster life was dominated by a squabbling Conservative Party; the country was cynically waiting for a give-away election budget; Labour was being shaken and modernised; and in the centre-ground, the Alliance had not given up on their dream of breaking the mould of politics.

The biggest difference, of course, was Margaret Thatcher, who gave politics a centrality, verve and sense of danger that has been lacking since she was despised by her colleagues. Even so, the echoes in policy between her and John

Major are striking. He parades a Euroscepticism very similar to hers. Privatisation; welfare reform; hostility to "treasury" teaching; aggressive populism on law and order — these are among the classically "Thatcherite" aims intact under Major. True, he has had sneze and disloyalty to contend with. But so did she: the Thatcher administration which barely survived the Westland affair was no stranger to either.

On the other side of the divide, Neil Kinnock was taking on a Marxist-influenced Labour left that has since disappeared from a serious place in British politics. Yet the similarities are, again, quite striking: without Kinnock's modernisers there would have been no New Labour. Paddy Ashdown retains the best radical instincts of the would-be mould-breakers.

So the surface of politics has stayed more or less intact, similar-seeming stories about a limited cast of characters getting up to a limited range of activities, who resign, and split and



If a week is a long time in politics, then it is little wonder that the past 10 years have been more than just soap opera, writes Andrew Marr

fornicate. There are the periodic "knife-edge" votes, which never quite result in the butter falling finally onto the floor. On it goes; on goes the rest of the world, strangely unaffected. Sometimes, this Ambridge-on-Thames world intersects with real life, during health scares, or in the shocked aftermath of shootings, or during real foreign crises, such as the Gulf war or Bosnia. But Westminster has become, for many, a subdued narrative at the edge of the eye's vision — a busy, entertaining place full of "news" — but where nothing really happens.

It is a common view. But it is also a shallow, lazy and desperately misguided assessment

which, we hope, readers of *The Independent* wouldn't have swallowed. Below the glittering surface where bubble-reputation glides, there have been dark, strong currents. Back in 1986, for instance, Mrs Thatcher's anti-Brussels instincts made her seem out of step. Today, her view has triumphed: the same party has stayed in power. But on European policy we have had, in effect, a change of government. And there has been a substantial transfer of authority to European institutions, coming at a time when the collapse of Communism removed the overriding need for Western democracies to stick together.

At home, under the seeming permafrost of one-party rule, there has been a shift towards quasi-nationalist and pro-Home Rule opinion in Scotland. The IRA ceasefire and peace process there have come unstuck; but even in Northern Ireland, the new thinking will not be forgotten, or lack consequences for the decade ahead.

Local government has been virtually destroyed as a theatre of free politics. The quango state has grown alarmingly. Judges have acquired new powers and a new self-confidence. And at Westminster, a series of celebrated confrontations, from the Westland affair to the events leading up to the Scott Report, and Hamilton, have exposed the failure of Parliament to stand up strongly in defence of its rights against the executive.

None of this is soap opera. It is genuine political drama, with real consequences for Britain. We have experienced a further weakening of that democracy with which *The Independent* was already concerned in its

early editions. It affects a lot beyond Westminster.

For instance, if we are at the limits of what we are prepared to pay for welfare — if there are some very hard and unpleasant questions to be asked. Developments in genetics and technology pose a generation's worth of ethical questions. The Greens may have sputtered, as a party, into a muddle of political irrelevance, but environmental politics isn't going away.

So though at times Westminster in the dying years of the century may seem like a thin farce, peopled by shallow and implausible figures, it is still a place where history is made.

It is impossible to tell whether reform will come, or how, and how dramatic it will be. Will Labour win? Will Tony Blair deliver? Will we join a full single currency and if so, what will the dissidents do? Only one thing seems clear: what is to come in the next decade is likely to be as important as what has happened during *The Independent*'s short lifetime so far.

House on the crest of a permanent wave

Was it, in retrospect, a moment of revolutionary significance when, in 1989, the TV cameras were allowed to film the proceedings of Parliament? Has it unravelled mysteries before the eyes of an eager public? Given impetus to the movement for accountability and reform? Or — as Michael Portillo famously claimed a couple of years ago — has it helped to bring into contempt a venerable and valuable institution?

Most of us are only aware of the televising of parliament from the tiny clips used to illustrate news bulletins. The demands of balance within reports further constrains what can be shown, so that a moment of Major, a bite of Blair and an instant of Ashdown have all to appear, rather than a longer *spiel* from any of them.

An impression of continual hubbub and posturing may be thus created (but was not that our perception



DAVID AARONOVITCH

His shirt would be flecked with tiny traces of L'Amico's *Amaretto*, his tie spotted with fig ash. The nearest my bloke got to sartorial sharpness was David Steel and his striped shirt/white collar abominations. To be called a dandy in the Commons it was sufficient to wear a red bow tie, and offer

to better judge, but the hairdos, the colours and the accessories were disastrous. Motley was certainly worn.

All changed, changed utterly. They saw themselves on the shows that now tiny fragments of their dowdy selves peeped over the PM's shoulder, or from between Paddy's legs; examined every wayward strand of thinning hair. And consulted the style experts. In came the image-makers, telling MPs what to wear and where to stand in order to look best on camera (what advice did they give to Jacques "Buzz-saw" Arnold? Lie down? Turn round?).

Whole wardrobes were carted off to Oxfam, and ended up clothing the homeless of Westminster. Middle of the range clothes shops were invaded by ambitious members, clutching colour charts and muttering that their florid complexions apparently went badly

with everything but grey. Toni and Guy suddenly found themselves dealing with a succession of tonsorial disasters.

There was a period of "dough-nutting" — collecting together around a speaker so as to give the impression of a crowded house — which began to collapse when directors were allowed to film "wide-shots", not just the area on either side of whoever was on his or her feet. But that was it, really.

It may be, of course, that the real impact of televising Parliament is yet to come.

If Labour/Lib-Dem coalescence produces real reforms in procedure, enhancing accountability; if a new government brings in a Freedom of Information Act; if there is (to quote Shirley Williams) a "great reforming administration" — then, perhaps, the Commons on TV will be of interest to more than hairdressers.

Days of our lives

THE INDEPENDENT
Police baton-charge poll tax riot

Margaret offers Nato reassured German unity

THE INDEPENDENT
Government in turmoil Chancellor resigns

A deep cloud of confidence in Thatcher

THE INDEPENDENT
UK isolation

Stars of democracy fail to shake Sochi's ratings

THE INDEPENDENT
Tory party in shock after Howe quits over Europe

Sudden exit dumbounds the Cabinet

It would be tragic to be left behind

THE INDEPENDENT
Thatcher battles to quell Cabinet revolt

It's a funny old world

of funeral rites Downing Street

Coffee forever beans

Iron grip corroded by fatal arrogance

The ending of Margaret Thatcher's leadership of her country and party was as violent as her eleven-year rule. Having lived by the sword, she died by it. When the blade was finally driven home, the drama was as brutal and as bloody as Shakespeare's Julius Caesar.

The only surprise was that it had taken such a broad swathe of her party so long to muster up the courage to move against a leader who had for so long treated so many of them with such patent contempt.

But calculation, and not courage, is the forte of the Conservative Party. The calculation was that she was leading her MPs to certain election defeat, and once that realisation had dawned, she was done for. The motive was self-preservation; the same calculation by which she herself challenged and vanquished Edward Heath in 1975.

By the time of her election victory in 1979, the project was ready to go. The plans had been laid, and while no one really imagined the scale of trade union reform and privatisation, or the unemployment consequences of monetarism, the eggs were ready for hatching.

It had not begun like that; it had all been quite modest really. There was a time when Margaret Thatcher was not a Thatcherite; there was a time when her modest defiance was used to disarm; there was a time when she actually listened to others.

But ideology, aggression and arrogance grew on her and with each success her image and ego became more and more inflated. She began to believe that Thatcherism was a new creed for a new era, that her election in 1979 marked a Year Zero before which the Conservatives had been as socialist as Labour, and that if she could conquer the miners, she could go on to conquer Brussels too.

One very senior Conservative who had helped to make her said after her demise that she began to approach everything and everyone in the same combative spirit. She spurned the advice of friends, cast them aside, and retreated increasingly into the bunker mentality that has destroyed so many leaders destined by visions of immortality.

It was from the bunker that the poll tax emerged. Having been rejected by a long line of Environment Secretaries during the early years of office, the proposal was finally embraced in a consultative green paper published by the Environment Secretary, Kenneth Baker, in January 1986.

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor



End of an era: She could scarcely believe those she loved so deeply had deserted her so fast. Photograph: Ken Lennox

Sheep that learned to roar

The House of Commons

The House of Commons is a cruel place, and MPs bated with laughter when Sir Geoffrey Howe, Leader of the Commons, announced on 26 October 1989: "The Government remains confidently in charge." His announcement followed the resignation of Nigel Lawson as Chancellor of the Exchequer: the first hard evidence that Margaret Thatcher's reign was beginning to fall apart.

In the 1970s Mr Lawson had been one of the first and earliest volunteers to what was to become the Thatcherite cause, and the way in which Mrs Thatcher undermined him showed how badly she was becoming isolated. His resignation had been precipitated by Mrs Thatcher's appointment of right-wing monetarist and Euro-phobe Sir

The assassins

Alan Walters as her personal economic adviser. The appointment was typical of the Thatcherite style at the time: she often preferred to undermine people before pushing them over. It was cruel but effective.

Losing a Chancellor was one thing, and perhaps she might have got away with that. But to lose her Deputy Prime Minister, Sir Geoffrey himself, proved just too much for jitters and destabilised Tory MPs who were growing increasingly concerned that their own necks were next.

While Mr Lawson's resignation speech had been damaging, it was nothing like the *coup de grace* delivered by Sir Geoffrey to the Commons. The man who had been

dubbed a "dead sheep" by Denis Healey showed that he was a wolf in sheep's clothing. His resignation letter highlighted the point that he has recently repeated in the "grandee" letter to the *Independent*: "All too much of our energy during the last decade has been devoted to correcting the consequences of our late start in Europe... I am deeply anxious that the mood you have struck... will make it more difficult for Britain to hold and retain a position of influence in this vital debate."

The fact that the argument still rages within the Tory ranks today shows how little has changed since, if Margaret Thatcher created a divided country, she performed no less of a service for her party, too.

Anthony Bevins

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

Glad to be grey, defying the odds

Brixton boy

galvanised Major into the Iron Man, but he toured the troops in a woolly sweater – confirming the public perception of the nice bloke from Brixton, the boy who ran away from the circus and joined a bank.

Major's strength was in mastering detail and at Maastricht fought hard over the small print of a treaty which was to dominate his years in office.

He won the 1992 General Election against all the odds, confounding Labour's slick campaign with the simplicity of his soap box. The Tory campaign posters, depicting a Labour "tax bombshell" appeared crude but proved lethal. As Neil Kinnock prepared to resign the Labour leadership, Major returned to Downing Street to declare that he wanted a "country at ease with itself". It was a hope he was never able to fulfil for his party.

Black Wednesday, 13 September, 1992, reinforced the impression of a Prime Minister at the mercy of forces beyond his control. Speculators made millions by selling sterling. Lamont tried to shore it up by raising interest rates, only to bring them down again when sterling was suspended from the European exchange rate mechanism. Major had taken Britain into the ERM; his policy was in ruins. Lamont later rejoiced in the bath, but no-one resigned.

At Maastricht, Major secured an opt-out for Britain from the European social chapter and a single European currency, but he had put his name to a document which prepared the road for European economic and monetary union.

Major promised to put Britain "at the heart of Europe" but that was impossible without going down the Maastricht road, and the growing band of former Thatcherites, now labelled Euro-sceptics, were ready to ambush him at every turn.

Major survived rebellions and knife-edge votes during the passage of the Maastricht Treaty Bill. In the midst of the European revolts, the Tories were hit by a series of sex scandals after Major had tried to revive the party with the "back to basics" campaign. He denied it was intended as a moral crusade, but the accusations of hypocrisy grew louder after Tory MPs were caught taking cash for questions and the Scott inquiry disclosed how ministers bent the export rules for Saddam before the Gulf War.

Given his turbulent years of office, it is no surprise that Major was accused of being a tactician, not a strategist. Behind it all was the desire of a decent man to bring the tiger to heel.

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent



Behind the barricades: Backbench unrest over European integration has been a persistent thorn in John Major's side. Photograph: Stefan Rousseau

Sceptic Tendency and the whipless

'Barmy Army'

Britain's contributions to the European Union, he removed the whip from eight of the most prominent Euro-rebels.

Norman Lamont, the former Chancellor, became one of Mr Major's most bitter critics when he resigned from the Cabinet, probably at being replaced by Kenneth Clarke. The "whipless" eight returned to the fold, but Mr Major's attempt at discipline failed to convince either the party or the country that he had a grip.

The rest of Fleet Street tried to identify the "barmy army", and *The Independent* obliged by putting forward a few suspects from the Euro-sceptic wing of the Tory back bench: Teresa Gorman, Tony Marlow, John Carlisle and Sir Richard Body.

Within months, the Prime Minister had them in his sights again. After some of them rebelled on a bill to increase

record remarks to ITN his reasons for not being more decisive. "The real problem is one of a tiny minority," he said. "I could have done all these clever, decisive things which people wanted me to do but I would have split the Conservative Party into smithereens."

In Tokyo, he said he was not just Prime Minister, but also leader of his party. To have followed Mrs Thatcher's leadership style would have split the party from top to bottom.

He has kept the party together, but trouble is looming from the awakening pro-European wing of the party: Kenneth Clarke, his Chancellor; and the other grandees who wrote their letter to *The Independent*, including Douglas Hurd and Lord Howe. Mr Major's troublemakers may have proved that being a manager is not enough.

Colin Brown

Northern Ireland

Testing times for troubled province

The old Chinese curse – may you live in interesting times – is afflicting Northern Ireland as much in 1996 as it did a decade ago. The killing rate may be lower, but the possibility of more violence remains in the air.

The prospect of an agreed settlement looks as far away as ever, as the age-old questions remain unresolved: whether Northern Ireland should be British, Irish, or a hybrid; whether it is a political or a terrorist problem; whether a system can be found under which the two communities can live harmoniously side by side. Yet it has been an extraordinarily eventful decade, with many high points and low moments, instances of dialogue and outbreaks of violence, and numerous times of great hope and near-despair.

In 1986 Northern Ireland was described, rightly, as a tense and dangerous place: "Gov-

ernment ministers venture out of their heavily fortified bases only fearfully and under heavy escort. Unionist politicians refuse all contact with them; some Unionist MPs now appear regularly at menacing midnight shows of strength along with masked men carrying cudgels."

That loyalist unrest sprang mainly from the Anglo-Irish agreement of the previous year, which scandalised Unionist opinion by giving Dublin a formal input into the running of Northern Ireland. Unionists believed, then as now, that the accord undermined the union with Britain.

It was five years before the ire of Unionist politicians abated, and before they, the government and nationalists politicians sat down to round-table talks. Those talks proved unsuccessful. The Anglo-Irish agree-

ment did not evolve into the powerful instrument which nationalists had hoped for, but nor was it destroyed by Unionist opposition, and Northern Ireland came to be viewed more and more as an Anglo-Irish matter rather than an purely British issue.

Those five years were plainly traumatic for Unionism, but they also had a profound if less immediately obvious effect on the IRA and Sinn Féin. IRA violence continued, both in Northern Ireland and in Britain, but beneath the surface the agreement helped fuel a far-reaching debate within republicanism. It took years filled with violence and an underground warren of secret meetings involving republicans, both governments and others, for that debate to develop into the peace process which led to the IRA cessation of violence of August 1994.

When the loyalists followed suit two months later hopes were high as it seemed a new era of dialogue and negotiation had begun. But the atmosphere steadily soured with rows over demands for the decommissioning of IRA weapons, over the calling of all-party talks and over how and when Sinn Féin might be admitted to political negotiations.

To some the IRA bomb attack on London's docklands in February did not come as a great surprise, given the sourness and lack of goodwill, but it still caused a huge shock, signifying as it seemed that the chance of peace had gone.

Another large bomb followed in Manchester, yet the attacks led not to a resumption of the troubles along the old lines,

but rather a form of limbo. The IRA re-

mained intent on attacking England yet Northern Ireland itself remained comparatively quiet. The Drumcree summer marching controversy severely damaged community relations, but even then both republicans and loyalists held their fire.

The political talks eventually began this year, but Sinn Féin has been excluded from them because of the IRA violence. Few believe the talks will succeed, but no one knows whether there will be a slide back to full-scale violence. No one knows, in other words, whether another chance can be created for peace, or whether Northern Ireland is fated to endure another ten years of conflict.

David McKittrick
Ireland Correspondent

ad to be
y, defying
e odds

Brixton boy

Rose wilted out in the wilderness

"Kinnock is now a charismatic figure," Tony Benn noted in his diary for 10 October 1986. Labour had just held its first redesigned pastel-and-rose conference, a pre-election rally bearing superficial resemblances to last week's.

Kinnock's standing ovation was six minutes long, as was Blair's last Tuesday. Benn had his self-important "usual annual agonies" on whether to join or not. "But I came to the conclusion that it was part of the eve-of-election game you had to play."

It is a game Labour is now infinitely better at: it is no longer a game, in fact. Electoralism has entered the party's soul.

In other respects, Labour's 1986 conference took place in a different political universe. The most striking line in Kinnock's speech was an emotional rephrasing of a non-nuclear defence policy as the ultimate patriotism: "I would fight and die for my country, but I tell you I would never let my country die for me."

How people see the 1987 election is a key to rival views of current Labour history.

The modernisers – increasingly identified as a faction during the policy review which followed the election – argued that Labour was nearly destroyed in 1987. After Labour lost the Greenwich by-election to the SDP in February, the party was in third place in the opinion polls.

Gordon Brown and Tony Blair feared Labour might win fewer votes than the Liberal-SDP Alliance in the general election. For them, Labour's performance in the 1987 election was a triumph, owed in large measure to Peter Mandelson, Labour's communications director and their close adviser and friend.

For traditionalists, Labour's performance was a disaster, attributed to high presentational gloss taking precedence over policy substance.

The moderniser view is psychologically less comfortable, and allows less space for the romantic possibilities of idealism, but it gradually prevailed.

The truth is that Labour fought the 1987 election on most of the same policies as in 1983. Kinnock reversed the party's anti-European stance, much of the prescriptive detail of the "longest suicide note" was stripped out and above all the presentation was modernised.

In 1987 the party was forced to face the fact that it had presented a fundamentally unpopular case about as well as it could conceivably be presented.

Kinnock privately declared that he would "never again" try to defend the non-nuclear policy. The *Independent* played a strange role in the pre-meditated-

Old Labour

ed sell-out. After declaring on television that there was no need for "something for nothing" disarmament in the Gorbachev era, Kinnock reversed the spin by putting a lunch with our political staff on the record and telling the tape recorder the policy would stay. It lasted another year. Meanwhile, the commitments to extensive public ownership and to restoring trade union privileges were also being dismantled.

Behind this project, Kinnock assembled a coalition of the soft left and progressive right against the traditionalists of both left and right. But the project was flawed, because it was essentially reactive. By 1989 the policy review was over and the policies on which Labour should have fought the previous election were set in stone. Before modernisation had even begun, it was stalled.

Then Margaret Thatcher was gone, and the Labour leadership, paralysed by Kinnock's lack of confidence and John Smith's manceuvring to succeed him, and lulled by skewed opinion polls, drifted fitlessly into the 1992 election.

John Smith expected to win that election, and set off from his home in Edinburgh on the morning of polling day saying that he would come back as Chancellor of the Exchequer. But by the time the Beswick result was announced he had put Plan B into operation.

Plan B had already caused friction, as Smith shut his rival Bryan Gould out of contention and kept open the option of replacing Kinnock before the election. Now, having waited patiently for 11 years, he seized the crown.

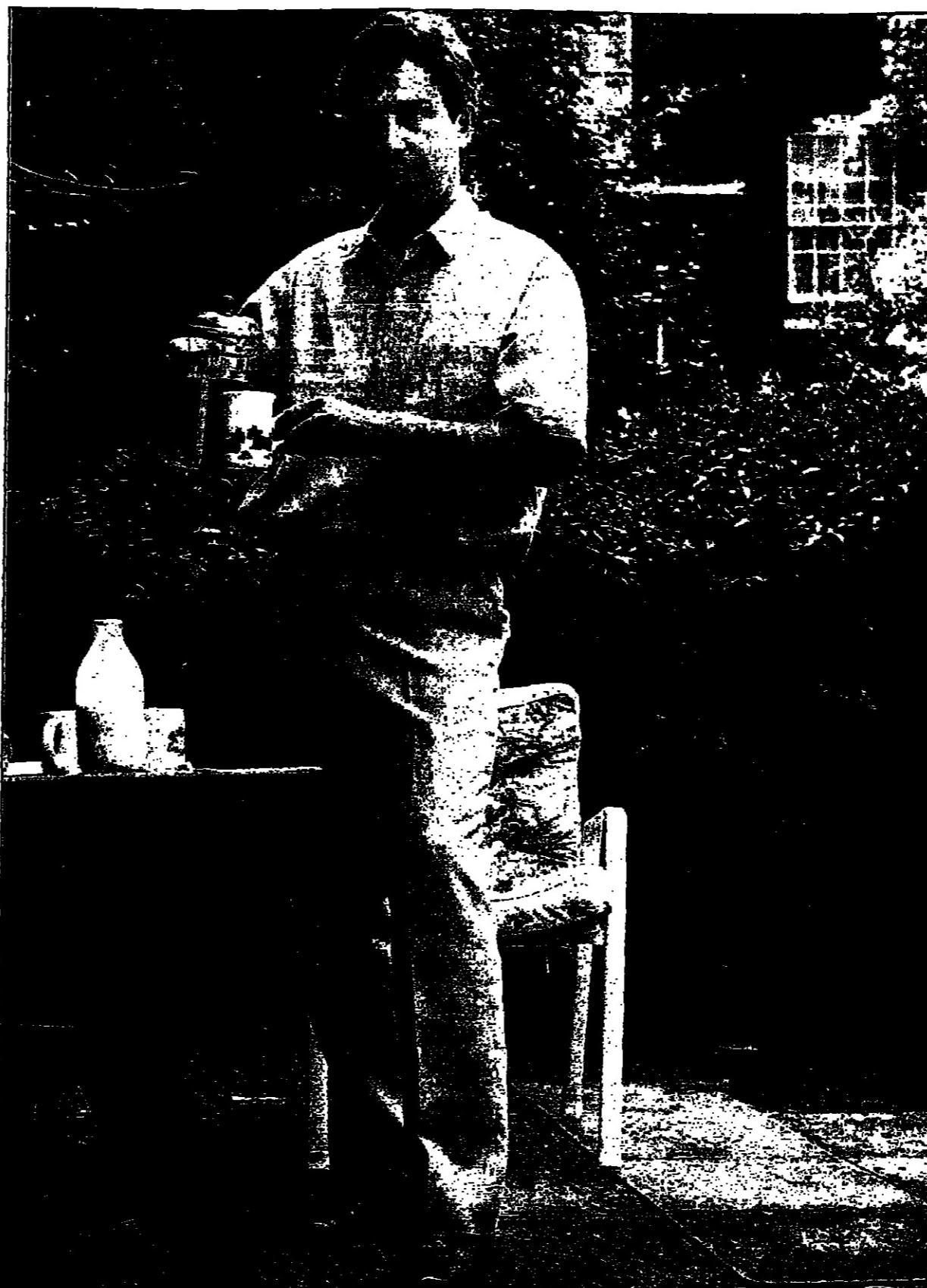
He was certainly the leader who might have won the 1992 election, but would he have won in 1997?

This is the second of the great issues of interpretation of the last 10 years of Labour's history, and again the modernisers' case is the more persuasive.

Bain and Brown were both personally close to Smith and genuine admirers of him – he had been a patron to both. But both felt that, having won the leadership on a moderniser platform – because there was no other – Smith had then settled for party unity at the expense of the necessary repositioning of Labour as a new party at the centre of British politics.

Leslie Butterfield, head of the party's advertising agency, suggested it should describe itself as "New Labour". But Smith rejected it. In the end his rule was to make Labour safe for Tony Blair.

John Rentoul
Political Correspondent



Project manager: The ultimate prize may now await the reforming Labour leader

Photograph: Brian Harris

Trading favours for fairness

Beyond the block vote

It has been *decent anni horribilis* for the union movement. Having lost any vestige of influence over the Government, it has gone on, over the past 10 years, to lose control of its own progeny – the Labour Party.

A decade ago trade unions commanded 90 per cent of the vote at Labour conferences and could often decide party policy.

By the end of the Eighties, the influence of union leaders on the Government had

virtually disappeared. The "tripartite approach" was effectively dead and the National Economic Development Council – a forum for government, employers and unions – was a sham. John Major finally put the council out of its misery in late 1992.

Since then the Government has barely acknowledged the existence of the union movement. The corridors of power remained firmly closed and the unions then

voted has been cut from 90 per cent to 50 per cent and some Blair advisers would like to see it fall even further.

A further Conservative term would be disastrous. Ministers appear to be planning more legislation to curb industrial action, specifically in the public sector.

Meanwhile, a Labour victory, under its "fairness not favours" theme, would not mean a return to fireside chats at Downing Street, but they may be able to influence policy by judicious conversations with ministers. It is likely there will also be a place for unions on the commission which will help the cabinet to determine a minimum wage. That is why unions have collaborated with New Labour. It is their last best hope.

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

New Labour was created by stealth, a parasite in the body of an old party which was founded as the political wing of the trade union movement in 1900. This is the traditionalist charge against Tony Blair and his two-year leadership.

If Blair were brutally honest,

he would plead guilty to the charge, and ask for two mitigating circumstances to be taken into account. One, old Labour was already dead and two, for most of its members their heads accepted the need for change, even if it was not in their hearts.

One of Blair's skills, of course, is that he is not brutally honest. He has never lied about his intentions, although sometimes you have to look at his words very carefully to realise that he has not said what you thought he had.

During the leadership campaign in 1994 he seemed to rule out a change to Clause IV, the commitment to "common ownership" in the party's constitution. He said no one wanted the debate about Clause IV "to be the priority of the Labour Party at the moment".

Nor did he think that "the vast majority of the British people sit out there and debate the intricacies of the Labour Party constitution".

He was elected leader of the party on a misleading, but not a dishonest, prospectus. His manifesto for the leadership was rightly derided by John Prescott as 5,000 wordy words. It did not propose to change a single Labour policy.

Yet, within nine months of his election, he had changed policy on the single European currency, tax cuts, inflation, the minimum wage, exam league tables, grant-maintained schools, Northern Ireland, regional government and the House of Lords.

In every case, as has been observed many times, the change had the effect of moving Labour closer to the Conservatives. And then there was Clause IV into which he wrote phrases which would have been rejected out of hand by party members only a year before.

The Labour Party is now constitutionally bound to promote the "enterprise at the market and the rigour of competition".

Just as dramatic were the changes to the party itself: the trade union block votes at conference cut from 70 to 50 per cent and this year, the party's policy programme was dictated by the leadership and put to a ballot of the entire membership for endorsement.

New Labour

Most audacious of all is Blair's use of political language. From being tough on crime to the party of business, he has engaged in what *Marxist Today* intellectuals, once called a hegemonic project. His use of the left-of-centre label turned out to mean precisely what the critics of betrayal said it meant. It mutated before our very eyes into the centre and left of centre, and now Labour is simply the party of the centre.

A realignment of politics in the next parliament no longer seems like speculation. When we was a bit of a *Marxist Today* intellectual himself, in 1987, Blair said: "The key to Mrs Thatcher's political success has been in destroying and re-creating contours of electoral support."

That, then, is what he is up to. He wants to destroy and incorporate the Liberal Democrats and do as much damage as possible to the Tories, preferably peeling off some of their One Nation wing.

But the "project" has run into a series of little local difficulties this year, and last week's conference was an exercise in reassurance for those party members disturbed by his and Harriet Harman's choice of schools, by the demotion of Clare Short and by the "take it or leave it" ballot on the manifesto. These were errors of judgement because – at least in the way they were handled – they gave the impression of politics as usual, rather than the new politics that Blair claimed to represent in 1994.

By seeking to reassure his party, Blair has again cast doubt on his core beliefs despite the impromptu passage on his father's stroke. There were too many slogans in the rest of his speech and not enough of the value-laden politics of family, community and duty.

In Blair's first nine months as leader, up to the special conference to rewrite Clause IV, party members were prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt. Since then, the doubts have reinforced some of them.

Before Harold Wilson's second election victory in 1966, Ian Macleod, inverted John F. Kennedy's description of himself as an "idealist without illusions". The Prime Minister, said Macleod, is an illusionist with ideals. It is a description of Blair that has become more possible over the last year, and has not yet been contradicted.

John Rentoul

ndency! hipless

The Spin Doctorate comes of age – with a ready soundbite

The hard sell

Spin doctor: n. A person, esp. a political aide, responsible for ensuring that others interpret an event from a particular point of view.

The term was invented in the 1984 presidential campaign in America, when Ronald Reagan was re-elected and Walter Mondale swept aside.

The term entered the lexicon in Britain when Labour shocked the media with a ruthlessly disciplined and professional election campaign in 1987. Peter Mandelson was not the first spin doctor in British politics – as he pointed out last month, Samuel Pepys was paid 30 shillings a year to handle Charles II's media relations – but he was responsible for a step change in British electioneering, in which the terms soundbite and photo-opportunity also became current.

Mandelson was appointed to the new post of Labour director

of communications in 1983. He was three things: a spin doctor, a meticulous organiser and an adviser on political tactics. In all three roles he excelled, although the press knew most about one first: and so wrote most about it. He briefed journalists, often with different times to suit their different outlets, planted stories helpful to the leadership and the unions – was a sham. John Major finally put the council out of its misery in late 1992.

Since then the Government has barely acknowledged the existence of the union movement. The corridors of power remained firmly closed and the unions then

information when, in its early days, its political editor and correspondents did not participate in the lobby system of off-the-record briefings by Downing Street.

Although the Tories won a crushing victory, they felt outsmarted; Norman Tebbit, mastermind of the 1987 Tory campaign, said that if he could afford to buy Mandelson he would. The Tories were about trying to catch up but never found an equivalent figure, although Tim Collins, the Central Office apparatchik who seemed much more junior than he was, came close. His finest hour was to put a favourable spin on John Major's victory in the Tory leadership election last year, when one third of Tory MPs failed to back him.

For the newspapers, the *Independent* led the campaign to identify the Prime Minister's press secretary as the source of

information when there were plenty of female candidates. And the 1987 election itself increased the number of women to 41.

Admittedly those 27 women still only made up 4 per cent of this Mother of Parliaments, but it seemed that change must be imminent. After all, one of those women was the Prime Minister, surely a successful role model for would-be women politicians?

The early signs from Westminster were cheery. In late October, Mrs Thatcher finally conceded that a bit of effort should be made to get more women into public life. In December 1986, Harriet Harman became the first MP to take maternity leave from a front-bench position. The SDP's party rule that every shortlist should include women



Now listen here: Alistair Campbell (right) dispenses the truth according to Labour

Photograph: John Voss

Striking a balance

Male bastion changing slowly

It had promised to be such a wonderful decade. In October 1986 there were 27 women MPs; 13 Conservative, 12 Labour and 2 Alliance.

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ensured that there were plenty of female candidates. And the 1987 election itself increased the number of women to 41.

Ten years on, very little of that promise has been realised. Another general election and several by-elections later, only 9.6 per cent of the Commons is women. This kind of rate of change – 5 per cent per decade – wouldn't give women equal representation with men for another 80 years. Oh yes, and the Prime Minister is a man again too.

The House of Commons itself has barely changed. A barbers' but, no hairdressers, a rifle range but no creche: such are the facilities that Westminster has to offer. Parliamentary hours have adapted slightly, with committees now meeting in the mornings rather than late into the night, allowing

MPs with families in London to get home to them during the week.

The absence of change has repercussions far beyond Parliament itself. Faced with a government that is more than 90 per cent male, it is hardly surprising that women are more suspicious of politics than men, and less likely to trust political leaders.

But the maleness of politics is not for want of trying by the few high-profile women who have been successful. The great political drama of the decade – the betrayal and casting of a Prime Minister in 1990 – featured a woman at centre-stage. Three and a half years later, Labour's Margaret Beckett gave a strong and dignified performance

as acting leader. Meanwhile Betty Boothroyd, elected the first woman speaker in 1992, keeps a house of rowdy men under control with superb authority.

Within the Conservative Party, Gillian Shepherd and Virginia Bottomley have climbed the Parliamentary ladder to join the Cabinet. Sadly, Mrs Shepherd is undervalued, and Mrs Bottomley regularly undermined. The entertaining Edwina Currie and Terri Gorman remain safely on the side-lines. When Emma Nicholson defected from the Conservatives to the Liberal Democrats, she was subjected to fierce sexist vitriol from both men and women in her old party. Her new party has rather better female representation: 16 per cent of its MPs are women.

The most well-known Labour women

(apart from Mrs Beckett), Harriet Harman and Clare Short, have had turbulent decades.

Rising star through the Eighties, Ms Harman provoked hostility among colleagues with her choice of schools for her sons, before being forgiven and re-elected to the NEC this autumn. Ms Short has swung on and off the front bench.

In 1990 Clare Short published a Fabian pamphlet calling for all-women shortlists in safe seats. Soon it was official party policy. Now Labour has 112 women candidates, 43 with a good chance, among the Conservatives, there are hardly any women candidates. But even so, the numbers bound to rise substantially in the next Parliament.

Yvette Cooper

Survival in hostile territory

Those close to Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, say that their greatest achievement over the past 10 years has been to survive as a party.

They are being squeezed for the centre ground by Labour under Tony Blair, and the next election will be a severe test of whether there is a place for a third force in British politics.

But whatever the outcome, the 1997 campaign is unlikely to be as difficult for Mr Ashdown as the 1987 election proved for the two-headed Alliance of the two Davids - Steel and Owen. Campaigning separately, they were tripped up by journalists armed with mobile telephones.

The differences between the leaders of the Liberal Party

and the SDP were torn open by a simple question: if there was a hung Parliament, who would they support: Thatcher or Kinck? Owen appeared to endorse Thatcher, while Steel left little doubt that he would prefer to support Labour.

The Alliance share of the vote fell from 25 per cent in 1983 to 22 per cent in 1987, and they were left with 22 seats - one fewer than before. Wounded by their failure to make any breakthrough, Steel and some members of the former SDP gang of four, moved quickly to merge the two parties.

They had not calculated for the possibility that Dr Owen might prefer to go it alone, and lead his own party against the

The middle ground

newly-created Liberal Democrats. Bob MacLennan pleaded with him not to do so, but there was worse to do.

When the Liberal Democrats - under MacLennan's temporary leadership - relaunched with the yellow bird logo, it was dismissed by Thatcher as a "dead parrot" but when the Liberal Democrats won the Eastbourne by-election, it appeared that the bird had twiched.

Paddy Ashdown took over the leadership of the Liberal Democrats from Steel in July 1988 at a time when the party had its backs to the wall. The turn-around began with Ashdown making five speeches in

one week at the party's 1989 conference. Surviving a sex scandal, his hyper-active leadership was to be the strength and the weakness of the party's revival. He was accused of being a one-man band and some former Liberals regretted the merger.

Ashdown concentrated on local government - surrendering the European elections - to rebuild from the grass roots. In the European poll, the Greens hit a record 15 per cent and the Liberal Democrats got only seven. The party faced a financial crisis.

The SDP faced a more serious financial crisis of its own when its principal backer, David

Sainsbury, pulled out. The death knell was sounded at the Liverpool Bootle by-election in May 1990 when the SDP candidate was beaten by Screaming Lord Sutch of the Monster Raving Looney Party. Owen decided the party was over, and wound up the SDP.

Ashdown and the Liberal Democrats kept up a brave face for the 1992 election, but slumped to 17.8 per cent of the vote - the lowest share of the poll for a third party since the Liberals' 7.5 per cent in 1970. They secured 20 seats, now lifted to 25 as a result of by-election victories and the defection of Emma Nicholson.

The Liberal Democrats' Parliamentary strength is four

times the Liberals' number of seats in the 1960s, and double that in the 1970s. Their strategists say they used to get one seat for every per centage point in the poll; that is now one and a half seats for every point.

Ashdown's strategy is now to concentrate on target seats in the hope of securing proportionately more seats at the election. But the former hype about a breakthrough has been replaced by a new realism. They want sufficient leverage on Prime Minister Blair to win electoral reform. That could give the third force a new dimension.

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent



Family man: Like others before her, Judith Mellor suffered the indignity of taking part in a photo-call with her husband, in an effort to salvage his career after his infidelity had been revealed in the press. Initially the couple remained together, but divorced following Mr Mellor's eventual resignation from the Government

Scandal

Major's moral crusade haunted by buried skeletons

Like politics itself, political scandal is always with us; only the packaging and presentation change. Gladstone and David Mellor may have had something in common but their style was somewhat different. Gladstone apparently read the Bible to prostitutes, while Mr Mellor preferred having his toes sucked. Either way, it adds up to scandal, even if neither man did perform in a Chelsea football shirt.

The past 10 years have been awash with reports of sexual misdemeanours, to the extent that during the winter of 1993-1994, there was a real threat of scandal fatigue. After reading about Tim Yeo's love child, David Ashby sharing a bed with another man and Stephen Norris sharing his with at least four women, fresh scandals came and went with barely an eyebrow raised by bored readers.

Mr Norris, the former transport minister felt safe enough with public reaction that he considered calling his memoirs serialised on BBC Radio 4 this week. *More Room on Top*.

It was all, of course, John Major's fault. He had been naive enough to tell his party conference in 1993 that he wanted a more moral Britain. We should, he said, get Back to Basics. That was OK if there were no skeletons in the cupboard but not if you were one of many Tory MPs with bones apolitical.

Hot on the heels of Yeo, Mellor, Ashby and Norris came Hartley Booth, who admitted an affair with his researcher, and Gary Waller, another Tory with a love-child. Most of this was missed by the foreign media, but there was worldwide coverage of the death of Stephen Milligan, the MP found dead in stockings and suspenders with a plastic bag over his head. It was a tragic way to die, but it typified the mess into which the Tories had trodden.

It didn't seem fair that the other parties got away with it. When it was revealed that Paddy Ashdown had had an affair - prompting the classic Sun headline "Paddy Pantdown" - his ratings actually improved.

More serious were the financial scandals. Whereas many MPs survived their sexual indiscretions, they found it more difficult to live through financial problems. Few found it easy to take seriously Norman Lamont's concern about claims that he bought champagne and cigarettes in a red light district. It was later proved that he hadn't. But when it was revealed that he had overspent his credit card limit 22 times, many asked just what control this Chancellor exercised over the public finances.

Alan Duncan quit his post after it was revealed that he had provided a neighbour with the money to buy his Westminster council house under "right to buy" legislation. Mr Duncan got to keep the property in return for allowing the man to live there rent-free until he died. It wasn't illegal, but many thought it an abuse. Also in Westminster, Dame Shirley Porter is still fighting allegations that she tried to trade homes for votes by selling off council houses in marginal areas on the basis that homeowners were more likely to vote Tory.

Some ministers found themselves embroiled in scandal through a lack of judgement, while others appeared to gain financially. Michael Mates resigned for sending a watch to Asil Nadir, the fugitive Polly Peck boss with the inscription "don't let the buggers get you down". It was not a hanging offence, according to John Major, but Mr Mates went, nonetheless. More recently, those involved in the "Cash for Questions" scandal were viewed with disdain by many of their peers. Agreeing to table

questions on behalf of a journalist, posing as a businessman, cost the ministerial jobs of David Tredinnick and Graham Riddick.

Neil Hamilton and Tim Smith were forced to resign after allegations that they had accepted cash from Mohammed al-Fayed, owner of Harrods, to ask questions on his behalf. Links with the likes of Mr Nadir and Mr Fayed proved to be a dangerous policy for some MPs. It was Mr Fayed who provided the evidence against Mr Hamilton that resulted in him abandoning his libel suit against the *Guardian* last week.

Dangerous, too, for Jonathan Aitken. As well as details of some £18,000 he claimed he gave to Mr Hamilton, Mr Fayed gave details of gifts and hospitality. And he said he gave similar hospitality at the Ritz Hotel in Paris, which he owes to Jonathan Aitken, who had been minister for arms procurement. Staying at the hotel at the same time - by coincidence, according to Mr Aitken - were some arms dealers, the relative of one of whom appeared to have paid half of his bill. That, Mr Aitken said, was a mistake which had been corrected later.

Not even Margaret Thatcher escaped the whirl of scandal. She had signed a £21bn arms deal with Saudi Arabia but, after she left office, rumours emerged of £12m commission secured on the deal by her son Mark, whose involvement had concerned senior civil servants for some time.

There was a time when it may have seemed unthinkable that Lady Thatcher would be embroiled in scandal. Such has politicians' esteem fallen, however, that the public is now surprised when they hear of an MP who has not.

Steve Boggan



Bravehearts: Many continue to resent the Tories, and calls for devolution are growing louder. Photograph: David Rose

The nationalist dream finds expression in Hollywood

Disunited Kingdom

they hated her. If Labour could not beat her, then Scottish Labour would haemorrhage and only the SNP could save the patient. It can be dangerous to compare politics and medicine and so it proved.

The Tories haemorrhaged, Labour benefited, but not enough, and the all-party Campaign for a Scottish Assembly was launched in 1988 officially to prepare for a Scottish parliament, and unofficially to besiege patience.

The SNP want outright independence, but the Welsh seek only greater control. Democracy has been kind to Plaid Cymru, delivering four MPs with half the level of popular support earned by the SNP.

Decimation of the coal and steel industries was followed by a hike in inward investment to ease the pain. Curiously the SNP turned the SNP into a believable force. But in the run up to the 1992 election, his dreams ran away with his strategy. "Scotland Free in '93" was

adopted as party slogan - but Lord James Douglas Hamilton, the Scottish Office minister, quickly laughed it off with "On the floor in '94."

The SNP had four MPs going into the election. They increased their share of the vote and yet ended up with only three seats. As Scotland Correspondent I asked Salmond after the disappointment if he had the stamina for another five years. He laughed. The question was important, or painful, or he was working on a new strategy.

Now the SNP believe they have a new secret weapon: Tony Blair and Labour's fudge on home rule.

Maybe the Scots have become too comfortable with being patient. Maybe that is their saving grace. "Though patience be a tired mare, yet she will plow" wrote Shakespeare in Henry V. Good sentiments, but then Henry was English after all.

James Cusick

Days of our lives

THE INDEPENDENT
Major pledges Tory unity

THE INDEPENDENT
Major back at No 10

THE INDEPENDENT
Shock quite amid squabbles

THE INDEPENDENT
MAN WHO WOULD HAVE LED BRITAIN

THE INDEPENDENT
Labour sets out to earn Britain's trust

THE INDEPENDENT
Labour's big gamble pays off

THE INDEPENDENT
Lord

THE INDEPENDENT
Minister quits to fight Libel battles

THE INDEPENDENT
Terror threat

It's

It's time for our leaders to face trial by TV

In the early hours of yesterday (our time) the first televised debate took place between President Bill Clinton and his Republican challenger Bob Dole. It did not make for compelling viewing – except for students of the political process, who will have been counting the thousands of staff hours that must have gone into preparing two candidates who for all their political skills are neither natural television performers, nor polished debaters. By all accounts the result was nil all. Bob Dole failed to land one on the President or force him into error; Clinton avoided stepping into the mire of allegations about drugs or personal life. Likewise the septuagenarian kept his end up without betraying the meanness of spirit that has, till now at least, been his stock in trade. So the judgement might be that this was hardly an exalted occasion in the history of American democracy, and surely not an example to be followed here as we stumble towards our general election. Wrong, on both counts.

The televised debate does the United States credit as a functioning democracy adapting to the modern world. Only a hair-shirt purist wedded to some mythical Athenian model of open-air franchise can object to the rapprochement of the electoral process and modern technology. Voters do not just need to see candidates on television and judge their performance on the medium,

they are entitled to it. It is important neither to exaggerate the psychological effects of television in elections, nor to underestimate the many ways in which pictures of candidates feed into beliefs and voting decisions.

Tricky Dicky Nixon was wrong to blame the medium for exposing his blue chin in the 1960 presidential election when he engaged in television debate with JFK. There is little American evidence, then or since, that performance on television as such has determined an election outcome. Neither Gerry Ford's defeat nor Ronald Reagan's victory four years later was the result of television debate. Bill Clinton did not thwart George Bush's bid for a second term because he outshone him on the box. Television has none the less become an essential vehicle. It captures moments, reinforces an impression, reflects and sometimes compounds a candidate's weaknesses and ambiguities. The television debate, three weeks or so before voters decide, has now become an informative ritual from which candidates shrink at their peril.

But that is the United States. Here we are not (yet) electing a president. But television already plays a huge – if little understood – role in political choice. British calculations being so much more difficult to make because of the weight of our partisan press. Use of television (which may often turn into use by television) is nowadays part of



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the governing process. What minister can hope to put over a controversial policy to the House of Commons alone, without attempting to persuade and inform in the television studios? Even their own backbenchers judge them as much by their performance on TV as on their performance in the debating chamber. Now that the proceedings of Parliament itself are televised, and now that politicians are so comfortable with the grammar of the medium and its opportunities for attack and defence, it is only logical to do what the Americans do and bring the party leaders into a formal televised election debate

some weeks before polling. The Hansard Society has recently been thinking about logistics. Here is our plan. It is for two or three substantial debates in which participants are allowed to cross-question each other, perhaps around a theme such as Europe or tax. The debate itself could be led, as in the United States, by panels of journalist-interlocutors chosen broadly to reflect the balance of opinion in the country. Though Messrs Major and Blair would not like it, these debates ought to be three-handed. This is not out of some instinct of kindness to the underdog. Ross Perot would

have enlivened the presidential debates in the US for the same reason Paddy Ashdown could make the difference between TV liveliness or boredom here. With two participants there is a danger of set-piece speeches dominating the event. With three there is greater opportunity for spiky cross-referencing, with the man never likely to reach the top office setting barbed traps for contenders anxious to stay on the straight and narrow path to Number Ten.

John Major should give the proposal serious thought. He is better in micro than in macro. It would probably be to his advantage to engage in such face-to-face discussion. Tony Blair, the contender, ought to welcome every opportunity to challenge the incumbent. One of the sessions should certainly be devoted to Europe, so that we can see how close the two may actually be, once they are outside the artificial contention of Prime Minister's Question Time.

We do not need to read Dickens's account of Eatanswill in *Pickwick Papers* to be reminded that the open hustings of yore were rarely a means of informing voters. And yet it is hard to resist the attractions of seeing the principal candidates in the flesh doing what comes naturally – advancing their cause by word and gesture. The camera's electronic eye is hardly foolproof. But it can see embarrassment, shilly-shallying and evasion. It gives a fair guide – to an audience now thor-

oughly schooled in the nuances of the medium – to sincerity and trustworthiness. It does not replace manifestos. It cannot obscure the faults or attractions of others in the ministerial team. It certainly will not confound the brute facts of economic history and policy competence. But it might add a useful occasion for seeing leaders in action. The capacity to perform on television is now, for better or worse, an essential ingredient in the make-up of a successful democratic politician.

Latin for love, not learning

Nick Tate, the Government's chief curriculum adviser, has a tendency to wallow in strange prejudices, for example over the question of teaching children this island's story as if there were a single, agreed version. Now he is suggesting primary school children might benefit from learning Latin. Nonsense.

Classics teachers love to assure us that learning Latin helps children with grammar and other romance languages. Maybe it does, maybe it doesn't. But Latin is a dead language, and we have enough trouble persuading children to speak English. The ancient languages are a beautiful ornament, not a necessity; let them be studied out of love alone.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Put adoption needs before party politics

Sir: As lawyers concerned with the welfare of children in care and adoption proceedings we share the concerns of the British Agencies for Adoption & Fostering (BAAF) at suggestions that the Government will not make time available in the coming parliamentary session for an Adoption Bill for England and Wales.

It would be a grave disservice to children if their interests were to be subordinated to party political considerations, and we urge all parties to ensure that priority is given to facilitating the passage of a Bill already published in draft, generally non-controversial, which is designed to promote the interests of children. Subject to some necessary amendments, on most of which we expect a wide measure of agreement, the draft Bill would provide a sound legislative framework for adoption.

The 1976 Adoption Act not only fails to reflect current practice, which has changed enormously in the last 20 years, but also fits imperfectly with the Children Act 1989 in a number of respects.

At present, if a step-parent adopts the child of his or her spouse, that spouse also has to become an adoptive parent. Parents are understandably affronted by this requirement, which can also cause considerable confusion for the child in later life. The proposed legislation would end this – as has already been provided for Scotland in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

The draft Bill contains measures which would give effect to the provisions of the 1993 Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, not only in England and Wales but also in the rest of the UK. The convention contains important safeguards without which children remain at risk of exploitation through intercountry adoption.

Where changes to legislation are proposed in detail, but delayed for an indefinite period, there can be confusion among both professionals and the public about what the law actually "says". It also provides a rationale to postpone important improvements in practice and procedures.

Adoption is a unique way of providing "a family for life" for children who cannot return to their birth families – these children are often the most disadvantaged in our society and, if a clear decision is not made about their future, the long-term effects may be very serious.

JENNIFER JENKINS,
Chair, BAAP Legal Group

Honourable THOMAS HEALD

Honourable Judge PETER UROUHART

ALLAN LEVY QC

Lord MESTON QC

ANDREW MACFARLANE

JANE HOYAL

BARBARA SLOMICKA

SUSANNA WALKER

JOHN MITCHELL

PAUL EVANS

IAN ROBERTSON

BARBARA MITCHELS

MAGGIE RAE

SARAH SLATER

Dr CAROLINE BALL

Senior Lecturer in Law, University of East Anglia

Professor MICHAEL FREEMAN

Professor CHRISTINA LYON

Professor JUDITH MASSON

NORMA MARTIN CLEMENT

Lecturer in Law, Leeds University

GILLIAN DOUGLAS

Chair, BAAP Welsh Legal Group

London E15

Mind, body and chronic fatigue

Sir: Well said, Yvette Cooper ("Tired of all this miserable ME stuff", 4 October). We too have had some "help" for our mild but relapsed Chronic Fatigue.

Syndrome that has demoralised rather than encouraged us. We have also faced the problem that laymen think the term "chronic fatigue" means that you should be bedridden through exhaustion. They then conclude that if you're not, it's all in your mind.

There seems little doubt that CFS is an illness that affects and is affected by both physiological and psychological processes. It causes widely differing symptoms. Some people, particularly adolescents, are sorely debilitated. Others, like us, cope for years with milder symptoms that ebb and flow.

The problems for the medical profession of diagnosis and treatment are particularly acute. But explaining the condition and getting supportive action from officials, employers and even well-intentioned friends is doubly difficult.

Until the causes and cures of CFS are understood, we have to take care to present what we do know as lucidly as possible, both to sustain the sufferers and to educate those who are in a position to help or hinder.

MARY PIMM
NIK WOOD
London E9

Sir: Yvette Cooper (4 October), writing of her experiences with ME, complains of people who thought she had a psychiatric, not a "normal" illness. This is another

example (most famously illustrated in Esther Rantzen's appalling ME programme) of stigmatising people with mental illness as somehow morally inferior.

As the Joint Colleges' report, referred to in the article, makes clear, ME (better termed Chronic Fatigue Syndrome) usually has both physical and psychiatric components. Sufferers who, because of fear of stigma, deny the possibility of psychological influences on treatment, both deprive themselves of sometimes helpful forms of therapy and denigrate others suffering from depression, as not really ill at all.

What they do for themselves is their own business. Their attitudes to those suffering from depression are not acceptable.

Professor PHILIP GRAHAM
London NW5

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Their attitudes to those suffering from depression are not acceptable.

Professor PHILIP GRAHAM
London NW5

Sir: I discovered Jung ("A psychic pyramid seller", 1 October) when I was a young Romanian searching for an alternative to the all-pervasive Marxist ideology and I must confess that I never considered Freud as more than a maniacal version of Marx, with the same love for dogma and hatred for the good side of the human soul.

One of the secrets of the perennial appeal of Jung is the convincing way in which he put the individual above any system,

showing that any totalitarian regime (be it Communist or fascist) relies heavily on individuals who have not yet reached the stage of "wholeness" or "individuation" which your article tries to deride but which is the infallible mark of genuine humankind.

BOGDAN BERCIU
London SE22

Bill for Trident still to be paid

Sir: I admire Clare Short's honesty. There should be more decent people like her in Parliament. However, she is simply wrong in asserting in her speech to the Labour Party conference that "there are no savings to be made by scrapping Trident" (report, 4 October).

Whoever briefed Ms Short presumably put it that as about £1.0bn of the £1.2bn of the construction costs for Trident submarines has already been committed and the rest will have been expended by the time of a May 1997 election, Trident is a financial fail *accoplisci*. Wrong.

The huge hangover costs of Trident are its operational, repair, refit and decommissioning costs. Estimates vary from Greenpeace's £21bn to £38bn calculated by Sir Ronald Mason, former Chief Scientific Adviser to the Ministry of Defence, who chaired the working group that advocated the purchase of Trident from the United States.

As Ms Short battles for

resources after she becomes minister for overseas development next year, she should not overlook the Trident savings pot.

Dr DAVID LOWRY
Stoneleigh, Surrey

Tories cut down on factory safety

Sir: Regarding encryption technology (report, 2 October; letter, 7 October), could governments not pass a law similar to that which applies to search warrants? The authorities could apply to a judge for a warrant to enforce the disclosure of decryption keys in the case of a suspected crime. This would answer civil liberty or commercial worries by offering recourse to a legal defence and remove the need for a bureaucracy to administer all the private keys. Of course, the security services would not then be able to view encrypted files in secret.

ANDREW THORNBURY
Aberdeen

Secret messages on the Internet

Sir: Regarding encryption technology (report, 2 October; letter, 7 October), could governments not pass a law similar to that which applies to search warrants? The authorities could apply to a judge for a warrant to enforce the disclosure of decryption keys in the case of a suspected crime. This would answer civil

liberty or commercial worries by offering recourse to a legal defence and remove the need for a bureaucracy to administer all the private keys. Of course, the security services would not then be able to view encrypted files in secret.

ANDREW THORNBURY
Aberdeen

Sir: One good use that could be made of the money stolen by the Nazis from Jews and sequestered by German Swiss bankers after the war would be to compensate Arabs deprived of their property to make way for Jewish settlement.

Another would be to compensate Germans like Frau Herta Fuchs of Dresden, who lost everything – husband, property and health – as a result of giving shelter to two Jews on the run at the end of the war and whose only wish now is to return to the smallholding from which she was ousted. (She has, incidentally, been decorated for her courage and humanity by Israel but not by Germany, whose good name she has done so much to rescue.) Why should the surviving heirs of those killed in the Holocaust be specifically compensated for losses shared by half of Europe?

Professor JOHN A. DAVIS
Cambridge

Baffling bypass

Sir: How can a government supposedly committed to the concept of sustainable development contemplate building the Salisbury bypass, an 11-mile dual carriageway across one of the most environmentally sensitive areas of the country (report, 2 October)? It was the Prime Minister who said, in the foreword to the Government's environmental policy White Paper *This Common Inheritance*: "We must put a proper value on the natural world; it would be odd to cherish a Constable and not the landscape he depicted."

A.D. DEACON
Salisbury

Nation of vandals

Sir: I sympathise with John Cundill (letter, 4 October) in his criticism of John Gummer's calling for well-mannered architecture in our cities.

As a current witness to my neighbour's systematic ruination of a fine Arts and Crafts house with replacement windows etc. I can think of no better quotation than that of our great Edwardian architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, who said: "The public don't know and don't really care a dog's leg about architecture."

TERENCE EDGAR
Wallasey, Wirral

Sir: A copy of the Conservative Party's booklet *The World Says Life Is Better in Britain* was delivered to my door by a young girl less than 10 years old. Is this an example of the skills revolution that will transform our workforce to compete with the Far East?

BILL ONWUSAH
London E15

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number.

Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk.

E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

essay

AD2001: he's older and greyer, but he's still in power ...

The political odyssey continues. Against all expectations John Major won the 1997 general election. Tony Blair left Britain to take up a Yale professorship. Donald Macintyre charts the new Tory agenda as the party heads for its 25th year in government

It was 2001. The silvery-haired John Major, now in sight of beating Margaret Thatcher's record of 11 years in office, had been looking back on the frenetic year of millennium celebrations. It was, he said in a pre-conference interview, a special pleasure to persuade the public to take up the National Lottery-funded offer of free IT training for all had been such a success. What better use of the Millennium Fund, now that the parties were over? Even the disappointment of Sir John Gummer, the distinctly green National Environmental Agency chairman, who had wanted to buy a rainforest with the money, had been short-lived.

To the deep frustration of ambitious Tories who had written him off in the run-up to the 1997 election, Major was riding high. His role as doyen of European leaders had been gratifyingly enhanced by the stresses within the EU caused by the single currency. Riots over the past year in Rome and Paris and demands that Germany pull out of the EU, all testified to the good sense of his decision, after one of the longest hesitations in political history, to stay out of EMU.

And round him, as he reminded an appreciative Lord David Frost, Britain had been changing fast. The veteran interviewer could scarcely get a word in as the PM warned to his theme of how he has made unemployment the lowest in

the Western World. And after decades of Tory ministers denying that crime had anything to do with unemployment, Major boasted that the slow reduction in crime figures was directly related to the fall in the jobless total – though, of course, he preferred to use homely Tory language to do so. "The devil makes work for idle hands," he told Lord Frost, a little smugly.

It wasn't just that the job seeker's allowance, introduced back on the inauspicious eve of the 1996 Tory conference, had paid such unforeseen dividends. Off the dole queues had come three groups: those who had simply lost the will and confidence to work; those who had been vigorously functioning in the black economy while drawing the dole; and those who had made the calculation that if an unpleasant job gave them only £10 a week more than benefits, it wasn't worth having.

Nor was it that welfare had been such a success. It was that the welfare "graduates" had had their chances of getting permanent jobs dramatically improved by the new employment "green zones". On new industrial estates recruits signed a contract explicitly excluding them from all those tiresome and arduous provisions of the corporate state, such as protection from unfair dismissal. The wages were low as everyone now knew, this was a first step towards the abolition of industrial tribunals and possibly the racial equality and equal opportunities commissions as well. The jobs, in

many cases, were frighteningly insecure. But for those who worked hard and didn't complain, there was a chance of moving up the income scale.

Indeed, the green zones were part of an extensive programme of deregulation which had eluded the third- and fourth-term administrations. The whole system of industrial accident compensation and health and safety at work enforcement had been privatised. So, too, had the enforcement of building and fire regulations.

Instead, it was left to insurance companies to ensure that factories, offices and housing projects were safe. Employers hadn't been too happy about this: the premiums added to non-wage costs, and to the annoyance of many bosses the insurance companies seemed even more zealous than their public servant predecessors.

But given that they had been clamouring for further reductions in public spending, they couldn't complain too loudly.

Changes in education had been no less dramatic. The right, for example, of outside organisations – from churches and voluntary groups to educational entrepreneurs in league with local parents – to start new schools and then turn them into grant-maintained schools within the state system, had existed in the fourth term.

What's more, Gillian Shephard had already removed the stipulation that new schools could not start when there were still vacant places in existing ones.

But nothing much happened until the huge fifth-term change of accounting within the education system introduced in 1997.

It was the result of capital charging – already operating in the NHS during the fourth term – schools would henceforth have budgets which took account of capital depreciation. And to borrow money for expansion or refurbishment they had to be able to meet the interest charges on the debt incurred. If they were popular, that was fine. But if they were weak schools, they would become weaker. Equally,

a new school could compete for funds on level terms, knowing that it would recover some of the capital costs of start-up if it succeeded.

There had been some problems, of course: the highly publicised collapse of some new schools. And the prospect of educational companies, some of them US-owned, taking over inner city sink comprehensives – and running them for profit with an income from the state which increased as its league table standing improved – was still strictly for the sixth term.

Major was now confident that he – or his successor as Tory leader – would win again. After all, with Labour split in two by the defeat, and Tony Blair now President of Yale University and Bill Clinton's most intimate and prominent adviser, how could he fail?

But with money following the pupil, an internal market was already generating a new energy in the education system. In some cases teachers had brought into the new freedom to form schools within schools – language and NVQ academies for example. Indeed, the fact that teachers had started to run their own institutions – often

sharing facilities with the mother school – was at last beginning to weaken the centralising politicised NUT.

On the critical issue of welfare reform, progress had been slower. Still an old-fashioned universalist by instinct, Major had resisted ending child benefit for the better off. Indeed, it was hard for him to do otherwise after the fuss the Tories had made in the election campaign about Gordon Brown's plans to take it away from the parents of 16-to-18-year-olds.

But he had given his increasingly radical Social Security Secretary Stephen Dorrell his head, in announcing the first step towards what in the long term would revolutionise our concept of the welfare state: the progressive privatisation of the basic state pension. In a move closely based on the Chilean measure of 1981, employees would now be invited, in return for sharply reduced national insurance contributions, to save a proportion of their earnings – in Chile it is between 10 and 20 per cent – in a pension account, redeemable only when they retire, and managed by competing and state-regulated private-sector pension prov-

iders. Instead of the basic state pension they would then get the whole of their contributions, plus interest, in the form of a retirement annuity.

The value of the pension

and the date for retirement

would depend on the level of contributions. Existing workers

could stay within the state system, but new ones would have to insure against their retirement in this way. And though Dorrell's announcement had been limited to pensions, it was increasingly clear that the manifesto for the next term would extend the principle to unemployment and sickness benefit.

Suddenly, the far-reaching

agenda, worked up in the

fourth term by the Adam Smith

Institute's Dr Madsen Pirie, of

replacing state social insurance

with the private sector-run individual "Fortune Account", was becoming a reality.

And, of course, privatisation

of the newly privatised London

Underground was now running

so well, combined with a

swingeing parking tax in city

centres, that commuters were

beginning to turn back to public transport. Postways PLC,

the 60 per cent Dutch-owned

Complete fantasy? At one level, no. There isn't an idea in this scenario which hasn't been considered by ministers and policy wonks with at least some access to the manifesto-making process. A good deal of it – privatisation of the Royal Mail and the London Underground – is a near certainty if Major were to win a fifth term. He apparently wants to abolish inheritance tax. And if he could widen the sources of school provision within the state sector, he would.

On another level, of course,

it's just a dream – or nightmare, depending on your tastes. It deliberately assumes uniformly benign consequences for a range of utterly untested and potentially explosive policies.

Freed of any obligation to

appease a right wing which had

in 1995 written off its chances

of winning, he would – or

should – be his own man. And even if that were not his instinct, which it is, Kenneth Clarke, also riding high as the architect of an election-winning budget, would be there to warn him against going too far.

Clarke recently pointed out that Chile was a military dictatorship when it privatised its social insurance system.

Nevertheless, there's much in this fantasy that will keep the more zealous of the party representatives going in Bournemouth as they struggle to suspend their own disbelief that their party can win. If fantasising about a fifth term can't sustain them this week, what will?



company which had taken over the Royal Mail, was waging a fierce price war with their rivals DHL, whose ugly but ubiquitous yellow letterboxes had become such a feature of the urban landscape.

There was much more, of course. Major was proud of the revival of local democracy now that he had ended capping and pinched from Labour the idea of annual council elections. The uniform business rate had been abolished, and a new, locally-decided rate introduced – directly relating the location of business investment to the efficiency of local authorities. In the North West, a pilot scheme in locally-raised sales taxes was under way.

There were problems, naturally. Major had resisted his friend Ian Lang's advice to set up a Scottish parliament and the Scottish National Party was growing daily in strength. Sir James Goldsmith, undaunted by the Referendum Party's indifferent showing in the 1997 election, had bought the newly privatised Channel Four and was now seeking to fight the next election on the hot protectionist issue of keeping imported programmes off digital and cable television. And the lifestyle sections of glossy magazines were filled with stories about the new generation of rich layabouts who didn't have to work at all because of the wholesale abolition of inheritance tax. But, all in all, there was plenty to be satisfied about. Having won not one but two elections against the odds, Major was, truly, the comeback kid.

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How the horse chestnut conkered Britain



Miles Kington

It is sometimes pointed out to the British that they have wonderful things growing wild which they completely ignore. We read about French chefs combing our woods for rare fungi. We see fishermen catching langoustines and spider crabs to be exported to places where they like eating these things better than we do. The Romans introduced the sweet chestnut tree into Britain 2,000 years ago, and we are still not particularly grateful for its fruit.

But there is one thing we

continentals never harvest and use, and that is the fruit of the horse chestnut.

Yes, I mean conkers.

We, and we alone in the world, have devised a use for conkers. Nowhere else in the world do people drill holes in conkers, put string through, tie knots and then proceed to bash each other's conkers to bits.

I was once in France, in the Cognac region, at conker time, and the chestnut trees were disgorging showers of big, brown, beautiful conkers, varnished and marbled like repro furniture, as big as truffles. (Not those nasty little black things grubbed up unhygienically in the woods by pensioned-off retired pigs, but proper big British rum truffles lying in their black paper nests on Thorntons' display shelves...)

I gathered a bag full of these shining French conkers, which were totally ignored by all the schoolchildren of France, and took them back to my children in London. The French customs official who looked in my conker bag at the airport as I embarked for England was taken aback.

... and I had quite forgotten what a painful business it is. Every time you miss the other conker with your blow, that is what happens most times, your conker whistles past their conker at

tremendous speed and ends up cracking you on the knee, or forearm, or worse. Next year I must wear protective clothing. Children, of course, think that the violence is an added attraction.

My son, who is no fool and knows that nature is usually up to some trick, has also asked me what conkers are really for, and I have given him a guarded sex education talk about tree procreation, about the way some trees spread their seed by using the wind, some depend on birds for carrying the seeds to a distance, and some use, well, other methods.

"How far do conkers spread chestnut trees?" he asked, and I had to admit that conkers cannot fly and don't bounce very well, and nobody thinks they are edible and worth picking, so they do not travel very far, but I have been thinking about it since and it has suddenly occurred

to me that the horse chestnut is the only tree that is smart enough to propagate itself through a children's game and therefore gets its fruit taken further than any other tree. As obediently as a blackbird taking yew berries, or the wind taking lime tree seeds, little boys take away loads of conkers. Some are used for games of conkers, and cracked, and ruined, but from my own observation most conkers are discarded through boredom and are therefore, with luck, transported several miles to start life again as a new tree.

In my case, don't forget, I once transported a bag of conkers several hundred miles from the Cognac area of France to central London. By any other standard it was an idiotic thing to do. But seen as an example of tree propagation, it is a blinding success story. At the time, of course, I imagined I was just taking home some conkers for the children. Now, I realise, I was merely a helpless victim of evolution, a hapless tool in the hands of nature's blind urge to procreate. It makes a chap feel humble, somehow.

the commentators

Nato should have good news for Alexander Lebed



Christopher Bellamy

The West has little to gain, and much to lose, in expanding eastwards

You cannot help liking the growing maverick Alexander Lebed, Russia's national security supremo. Yesterday Russia's rumbling loose cannon arrived at Nato's Brussels headquarters - his first visit to the lair of the Western alliance which, as a former Russian general, he was brought up to fear and distrust. In the past few weeks he has sounded dire warnings about the state of the vast but crumbling Russian military machine, and about the dire consequences if Nato proceeds with its plans to expand to the east, ranging from firing a salvo of missiles - albeit "rusty" ones - to cutting off trade with Germany and the US.

The irony is that there are a lot of people in Nato who sympathise with Lebed's publicly expressed view that Nato should not expand to the east. After all, getting 16 nations to agree on anything is difficult enough: more members mean more problems. And the Nato security guarantee is a pretty Draconian commitment. If Poland joins Nato, and then finds itself at war with Ukraine, which may be backed by Russia, Nato could find itself dragged into something very nasty indeed. There is a hidden purpose behind Mr Lebed's visit - a quiet and unstated collusion between Russia and Nato, giving new and real force to the coded phrase "16 plus one". Nato and Russia.

The Russian statements against Nato "expansion" were all for home consumption. At the weekend, Mr Lebed looked forward to a "complicated but civilised dialogue" with Nato. Privately, there was none of the tub-thumping polemic associated with his public appearances, which has more to do with his position as heir-apparent to Boris Yeltsin than with his current position. He has less influence on Russian policy towards Nato than he likes to make out, and has no mandate to negotiate on Nato expansion. Russia's foreign minister, Yevgeny Primakov, calls the shots, and he has made it clear that he does not want the issue of Nato expansion to threaten the cooperation between Russia and the West, which Russia desperately needs if it is to enjoy the prosperity it deserves.

All the talk of Nato "expansion" is a little misleading. Nato does not particularly want to expand. The newly democratic and free states of eastern Europe want to join, and have been hammering on the door. The three leading candidates - Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary - are likely to be invited to join in May, and are expected to enter the alliance on its 50th anniversary, in April 1999.

Russia's worries are understandable, even well-founded. For more than 200 years Russia and the Soviet Union approached security in a remarkably consistent fashion: push the potential "enemy" further and further away, so that space could be traded for time. The tsars had Poland, Russia's "sword arm, sticking out into Europe", as Karl Marx described it. Beginning with the annexation of the Baltic

a lot of security but not offer much in return.

Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary are different. Central European, even liberal by tradition, they are obvious candidates for membership not only of Nato but also the EU - for which they are also front-runners. From Nato's point of view, they have also offered a disproportionate contribution to the art of war in recent centuries. Individual Poles fighting with the Allies played a distinguished role in the Allied effort in the last world war. The Czechs built brilliant tanks - later adopted by the Germans. And think of the Bren gun - the Brno-Emfeld, a Czech design, adopted with great success by the British. Attending joint Polish-British manoeuvres the other week, one could not fail to sense the affinity between them.

The exercises have a practical purpose: to test whether eastern European countries can work with Nato as part of a military alliance. Privately, Nato generals doubt whether the differences in command, control and communications will be overcome sufficiently by 1999.

The joint exercises are far have concentrated on less demanding tasks: peacekeeping, search and rescue, humanitarian aid. They have also been doing it for real, in Bosnia.

But Russia, too, has been working with Nato in Bosnia - very successfully, with a 1,200-strong Russian brigade working under the control of the US-led division in Tuzla. Nato expansion, and a special relationship between Nato and Russia, already exist. It is one area where reality is well in advance of the theory.

Perhaps this is the key. Practice is more important than theory. The benefits of expanding Nato are slight, if that. The disadvantages are obvious and real. Lebed should be sent back to Russia with assurances that Nato will not be knocking on his door.

states in 1940 and continuing with an unexpected bonanza - the victorious sweep of the Red Army to Berlin - the Soviet Union re-established a cordon sanitaire of client states stretching as far as the Elbe.

Among the keenest applicants to join Nato are the three Baltic states - Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Nato - including Britain - has been training the Baltics' armed forces to bring them up to "Nato standard". But although proportionally speaking, the investment in the Baltics has been greater than elsewhere, they are not in the front rank for joining Nato in 1999. The reason is obvious. They abut on to Russia's heartland, and were the Soviet Union's gateway to the sea. Private discussions between Mr Lebed and Nato's Secretary General, Javier Solana, are likely to sketch out a deal: "Yes, take Poland, Hungary and the Czech republic if you want to, but leave the Baltics".

That has attractions for Nato. The same has been consistent: "Nato membership also brings obligations. It involves not only receiving security but also contributing to it." On the far side of the Baltic, up against Russia, the Baltics will absorb

a lot of security but not offer much in return.

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Is this the man to say 'No, minister'?

by David Walker



ation," said a contemporary of Sir Gordon yesterday, "can be relied upon for moral courage - which means saying no to ministers, or MPs if it comes to that. He is not going suddenly to turn round and become a wobbly jelly."

Independence of mind comes with the civil service job, as it was. In Sir Gordon's case this has been buttressed by his service as C&AG, a key role which involves blowing the whistle on permanent secretaries who have done their sums wrong or assisting them if they are minded to blow the whistle on ministers for mis-spending public money.

Sir Gordon was headhunted for the job of Commissioner of Parliamentary Standards. A cynic might say that, alongside all his tormal qualifications, he was a parliamentary insider. As a former C&AG, he knows how the House of Commons works. For example, he knows how few MPs ever turn up to the debates on Public Accounts Committee reports, let alone how many of them ever bother to read its studies of departments and quangos and their spending - but he would never dream of making a public speech labelling the House of Commons as a hopeless monitor of the £15bn or more of spending it votes each year.

"Sir Gordon," said a friend yesterday, "who himself knows a thing or two about that semi-private world of accounting and auditing of public money," is a quiet operator." Sir Gordon himself says that as C&AG he was prepared to make a racket. Asked if he would have played the game had he been pressured to keep a lid on an embarrassing revelation, he replied: "I wouldn't have stood for it." Though he doesn't expect that kind of pressure now, he notes that he is, officially at least, retired and so not beholden to anyone for his integrity.

No one questions his personal probity. But does he have the wily political skills that would, for example, keep him out of the various traps set for Sir Richard Scott in his arms to Iraq inquiry?

For all the alleged radicalism of the Thatcher years, Britain is still run by chaps who trust other chaps. In such a world making a stink, calling the television cameras in, exposing MPs to further ridicule and embarrassment would take a most uncivil willingness to hold Parliament up to damaging criticism. Little in his career to date suggests that Sir Gordon would relish such a public scrap.

Sir Gordon Downey may find himself in a situation where the public interest demands nifty footwork and a willingness to scream

retaryship might come his way in a spending department.

Instead, after a spell in the Central Policy Review Staff, he walked into a job he had himself helped to create. He became Controller and Auditor General (C&AG), the public's chief financial watchdog, and head of the National Audit Office. On leaving the NAO in 1987, Sir Gordon went to Ernst & Young accountants, then to the City, becoming first chairman of Fimbra (the Financial Intermediaries, Managers and Brokers Regulatory Association) and then of the Personal

Investment Authority. Voices were to be heard criticising his capacity to keep up with a fast-changing scene; others say he did move swiftly, for example to dispense with Fimbra's first chief executive. Sir Gordon has also acted as the readers' representative on *The Independent*.

The date Sir Gordon left the civil service is important if you believe - as many top officials of his generation do - that under Mrs Thatcher things ethical started to go adrift. It was that year that she sacked the head of the civil service, Sir Ian Bancroft. Since then Lord Ban-

croft has pushed the idea that civil servants are "ballast in the constitution"; they serve an interest higher than any individual set of government ministers. This means that confronted with wrongdoing they should be trusted to blow the whistle. The official theory remains that set out by Mrs Thatcher's replacement civil service head, Lord Armstrong, that civil servants obey their ministers enthusiastically and with no nonsense about higher obligations to the Crown or the public interest.

"Civil servants of our genera-

So what if politics isn't sexy?

The BBC is right to give parties huge coverage, says Samir Shah



There's too much political coverage on television and radio? Many think so. And the finger of guilt points most accusingly at the BBC. The view of David Walker, in *The Independent* last week, and other commentators, seems to be that the hot-house of Westminster and its self-referential denizens should be left to rot in their own square mile and be stopped from boring the pants off the watching and listening millions.

Underpinning this conclusion is the idea that politicians are a venal lot, conforming increasingly to Disraeli's description of a politician's career as one of "plundering and blundering"; that not only is there too much politics broadcast but that what we see and hear is arcane and of interest only to those who belong to the Westminster club; so why bother to report their comings and goings so much?

There is some truth in all of this. The reaction of some of our competitors has been to throw in the towel - restrict coverage to the absolute minimum and fill the space with more "human interest" journalism - a euphemism for a diet of stories about sex, crime and foreign violence.

The BBC, though, is playing a bigger game. Our covenant with the British people, founded on the licence fee, is that we shall not take the easy route. We will continue to strike out on our own: distinctive, different and committed not only to entertain but to inform and educate, too.

This means a commitment to democracy and public accountability. Whatever we may think of our politicians, they wield real power over us - determining how much of the money we earn we can keep; the kind of schools we send our children to; the level of treatment we get in our hospitals. Global forces may well signal the end of the nation state and its politicians but, right now, politicians matter. They can do to us what Philip Larkin ascribed to our mothers and fathers. As a result, it is our duty to report and analyse what they say and do.

But do we need quite so much politics on air? The point is that we have different programmes, different channels, each tailored to suit the needs of particular audiences and their tastes. To those jaded by the sheer volume of what we do, I would

echo the words of Tom Paine: "Those who wish to reap the blessing of freedom must undergo the fatigues of supporting it."

There is some truth in the criticisms of our political coverage. But the annual cry over numbers at party conferences is inaccurate and often misleading. The total number of more than 400 being bandied about is a spurious one: artificially bumped up by counting technical staff who are needed to rig and de-rig the equipment, and by adding together all the journalists accredited, many of whom are there for only short periods. The result is that actual numbers on any given day are less than half the grand total. However, it's clear that new technology and new ways of working will enable us to cut down on numbers.

The charge that we are too concerned with the Westminster hot-house and our discourse is too recondite also has some merit. We have gathered information from focus groups of "ordinary people" to help improve our understanding of the problem. Language is a key factor. But here there are real difficulties: many people did not understand the meaning of commonly used words, such as Chief Whip. In a world of sleaze and scandal, such a job title might be vulnerable to serious misinterpretation.

The writer is head of political programmes, BBC

Remember the houses of evil

Gloucester City Council's communications director was po-faced about it: "It was the council's decision that the interests of the city would not be served by 25 Cromwell Street remaining standing." Accordingly, demolition began yesterday, and the house will not only be torn down but every brick will be pulverised, every fitting melted down, every timber reduced to ash, and the cleared site covered by a thick concrete plug, as if it were full of nuclear waste.

It's obvious: the continued existence of Fred and Rose West's old home would be bad for Gloucester's image; attract the wrong sort of sightseers; remind all and sundry of an episode best firmly put behind us. Concerns about

presentations and public relations may be invoked, but the house is ancient and thoroughly English, preserved in such manner as "out of sight, out of mind", "least said, soonest mended". In Dunblane, where the gym is to be demolished, a similar impulse is at work.

With respect, it won't work. Ten Killington Place, where John Christie murdered at least six women in the Forties and Fifties, had its name changed and then in the 1970s was demolished. But it still attracts the curious thanks to the *Murder Guide to Britain*, which pinpoints its location. Years after demolition, someone painted REMEMBER CHRISTIE in large red letters near the site. If the reverberation of a

crime in the popular mind is sufficiently strong, demolition and name-changing will not kill it; on the contrary, a gaping, empty lot will only seem to suck in the prurient and ghoulish, imaginings working overtime. Walking tours of the East End attempt to retrace the steps of Jack the Ripper, and the fact that nothing remains as it was (Room 13, Miller's Court, where his fifth and final victim died, is under a car park near Spitalfields market) makes the experience more spooky rather than less.

Other sites of famous crimes, left alone, succeed in reverting to normality of a sort. The house in Cranley Gardens, north London, where Dennis Nilsen dismembered 16 young men, was later converted into flats and re-sold. Sonia Sutcliffe bought back the house she had been forced to sell to pay compensation to her husband's victims, remarking, "It's not a house of horrors, but a very nice home."

The Wests' house should have been left standing to acquaint the curious with the banality of evil. Places like the London Dungeon try to abstract evil from its human context and re-package it as entertainment. The result is trashy and horrible. But evil is all around us and never separable from human suffering. Left standing, 25 Cromwell Street would have been a useful reminder of that.

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CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

Banks get half of Tunnel in £4.7bn debt swap

MICHAEL HARRISON

Eurotunnel is to swap just over half its £8.7bn debt mountain for shares and other paper in a deal which will give its banks immediate ownership of just under half the Channel Tunnel and put its finances on an even keel for the first time in nearly a decade.

The complex deal, thrashed out by Eurotunnel and a key steering group of six lenders, will see £4.7bn of debt exchanged for equity and other financial instruments and the banks take a 45.5 per cent stake in the business.

Depending on Eurotunnel's performance over the next seven years, the banks could increase their stake to 60 per cent although the company's 750,000 shareholders will have the option to subscribe for enough shares to retain control.

The announcement of the debt restructuring package paves the way for Eurotunnel shares, suspended a week ago at 115p, to resume trading this morning. Brokers were last night predicting that the shares would rise initially to nearer 130p – the price at which the first tranche of debt will be swapped.

Provided the deal is approved by Eurotunnel's shareholders and ratified by the 225 members of the banking syndicate, the company will see its annual interest payments cut from £650m to £400m a year and it average interest charge fall to 5.2 per cent.

However, the company will not have enough spare cash to pay even this lower interest charge until sometime in the next century so it is effectively taking an interest holiday on a portion of the debt until 2006.

Sir Alastair Morton, the outgoing co-chairman of Euro-

tunnel, described the accord as "fair and robust" and said he was confident that shareholders and banks alike would accept the deal.

"They have from now until next spring to sit down and judge this compromise. I hope they will be convinced, I think they will," he said.

Referring to the possibility that smaller banks in the syndicate will hold out for a better deal, Sir Alastair added: "Nobody wants a collapse and nobody is looking for a Doomsday scenario. If that happens because of a few blackmailing

Sir Alastair:
'Nobody wants
a collapse
and nobody
is looking for
a Doomsday
scenario'

banks, the big banks have developed a way of sorting it out."

As part of the restructuring package, Eurotunnel will also approach the British and French Governments to seek an extension of its concession to somewhere between 65 and 99 years. It is currently due to run out in 2052. Sir Alastair stressed, however, that the deal was not contingent on the concession being extended.

Under the terms of the restructuring announced yesterday, Eurotunnel will swap £1bn of debt for new straight equity and convert another £1bn into equity notes which it can either redeem partially itself in 2003

or exchange for shares in which case existing shareholders would see their holdings diluted to just under 40 per cent of the equity.

A further £1.5bn of debt will be exchanged for bonds paying a 6.25 per cent coupon until 2003 and the remaining £1.2bn of debt will be swapped for loan notes which will initially pay fixed interest of 1 per cent and are redeemable by 2040.

The key component of the deal will be Eurotunnel's ability to pay some of the interest it owes in the form of stabilisation notes which themselves will not bear any interest until 2006. Eurotunnel has the authority to issue up to £1.85bn worth of these notes.

In this way Eurotunnel effectively avoids paying compound interest on its debts for the next decade by which time the company expects it will comfortably be able to meet its debt service obligations and more. "It is the compound interest that kills you and this deal puts a cap on that," Sir Alastair said.

The conversion price for the first £1bn of debt and the stabilisation notes will be 130p. The equity notes will be converted at a price of 150p a share.

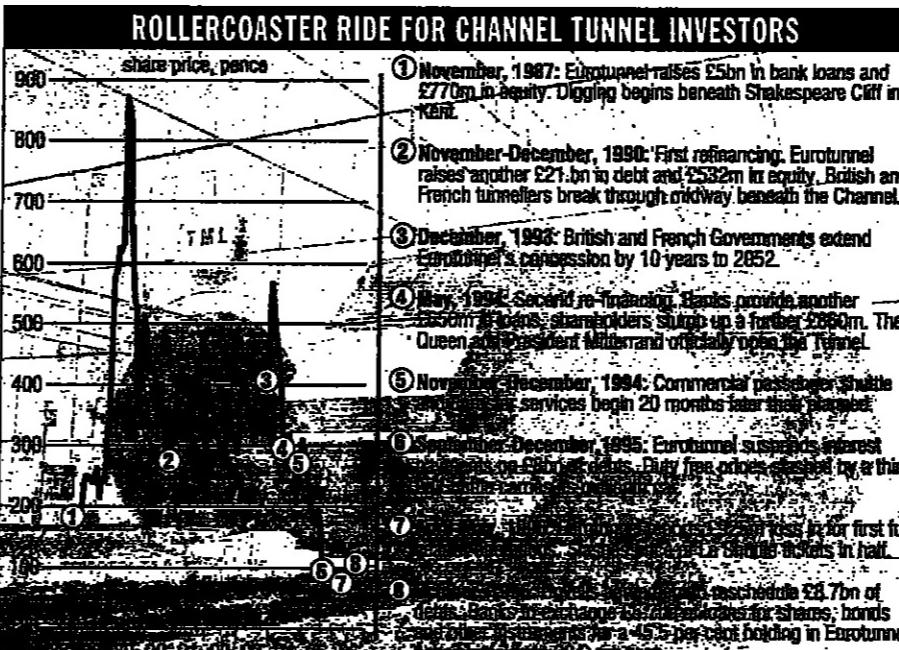
Alternatively, Eurotunnel can redeem a portion of them through the proceeds of a new warrant issue giving existing shareholders the right to subscribe for new shares at 150p.

Of Eurotunnel's 750,000 shareholders, 81 per cent are French while 68 per cent of its equity is held by individuals rather than institutions. Two thirds of French shareholders need to vote in favour of the deal at an extraordinary meeting intended by those holding at least 25 per cent of the equity.

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Sir Alastair Morton, announcing details yesterday of the 'fair and robust' accord



SHV launches £506m cash bid for Calor shares

MAGNUS GRIMOND

SHV, the private Dutch company which owns the Makro cash-and-carry chain, yesterday launched a £506m bid to buy out the minority shareholders in Calor, the bottled gas group which it first bought into nearly 10 years ago.

News of the 300p-a-share cash offer was rushed out after a surge in the price, which has risen from 242p since the middle of September and closed a further 6.5p higher at 297p yesterday.

The cash bid, which includes a 40p special dividend payable from the company's own resources, is being recommended by the two independent directors on the Calor board, Michael Davies and George Duncan. Details of the offer, which will cost SHV £246m, will be announced today.

The announcement follows an erratic trading performance over the past five years at Calor, which has formed a joint venture with Texaco in the Southwest of England to compete in the competitive market for domestic gas and is also investing with SHV in fledgling bottled gas projects abroad.

Advisors to both sides said talks between SHV and the two outside directors began at the

end of last month following the realisation that the Dutch group's aims for Calor conflicted with the desire of many UK institutional shareholders for growing levels of dividends.

Michael McNish, of SBC Warburg, which is advising Calor, said the core bottled gas business was mature, but margins were coming under pressure in a competitive market. At the same time, under co-investment arrangements with gas group SHV Energy, Calor had invested £40m in areas such as Brazil, China, India and Southeast Asia, with authority from shareholders to go up to £90m or £100m.

Mr McNish said there were "significant capital requirements" and obviously SHV policy is that these are investments for the long term.

The bid is being pursued by means of a scheme of arrangement which allows the court-approved compulsory purchase of non-existing shareholders' holdings on receipt of votes covering 75 per cent of the outstanding shares, rather than the usual 90 per cent. It is understood this method was chosen, given the practical difficulty of persuading the few individual shareholders thought to represent a little over 10 per cent of the total equity, in agreeing to the terms.

News of the negotiations sent shares in the oil sector to all-

sued while Mr Botnar, who lives in Switzerland and travels to homes in Germany and Spain, was abroad still stood.

Mark Spragg, a partner with the London solicitors Jeffrey Green Russell, who has been representing Mr Botnar for the past three years, said he expected to issue proceedings against the Revenue this week on the grounds that the warrant had been kept in place for "ulterior motives".

He said: "It is believed the Revenue had 'hamstrung' his case by preventing him and key witnesses

from travelling to Britain to give evidence at proceedings due to have begun in front of the specialist tax commissioners yesterday.

Though it is usual for settlements of this type to state that criminal proceedings have been abandoned, sources close to Mr Botnar claim that he refused to co-operate with the system by admitting any guilt and negotiating to have the warrant lifted.

In a statement issued on his behalf yesterday, Mr Botnar alleged that his company, which is now little more than a prop-

erty holding company, had been destroyed by convenience between the Revenue and Nissan of Japan, which wanted to take over the UK dealerships.

He also reiterated claims that Nissan UK did not owe "a penny of corporation tax" and said he was paying the money "to avoid another five years of frustration, litigation and enormous expenditure" on a case in which he is convinced he cannot obtain justice. "I am a man of principle, honesty and charity. I believe in fair play. The absence of fair play on the part of

the Revenue persuaded us to settle so as to rid ourselves of this problem, which has robbed five years of my life," he said. He urged the Revenue to dominate the money to the Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Sources close to Mr Botnar insist that though the payment of more than £50m might look like an admission of guilt, the money does not matter to him. Mr Spragg said: "To him, the money is totally insignificant."

The Revenue would only say that the dispute between themselves and NUK had been

resolved in a commercial settlement and that "all civil proceedings between the two parties" were being discontinued.

The affair began in June 1991 when the Revenue launched a raid at the Worthing headquarters of the business that Mr Botnar had built up over the previous two decades.

At the time of the raid, Mr Botnar was on holiday in Switzerland with his wife, and after he decided not to return, the Revenue issued a warrant for his arrest.

Shell and Texaco merger could create world's biggest oil group

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Shell Oil, the US arm of Royal Dutch Shell, and Texaco are in talks which could create the world's largest oil marketing operation. The two oil giants confirmed yesterday they were discussing a possible merger of their US refining and marketing businesses in a deal which analysts said would create a \$10bn (£6.4bn) company with around 15 per cent of the US petroleum products market.

Star Enterprise, a joint venture between Saudi Arabia's Aramco oil group and Texaco, is also involved in the talks.

News of the negotiations sent

time high yesterday, with Shell up 17p to £10.16 and BP 12p better at 699.5p. Analysts welcomed the news, which they said was part of a growing trend of integrated oil groups to seek new solutions to downstream assets which had been underperforming for years.

Earlier this year BP and Mobil announced a \$5bn deal to merge their downstream assets in Europe, Exxon, the US group, and OMV of Germany have also announced plans to merge two adjacent refineries.

A US newspaper report prompted the statement from Shell Oil yesterday. The company said: "It is discussing with Texaco the potential for joint

arrangements involving US downstream operations. While the companies are reviewing a range of options concerning the businesses which might be involved, no decisions have been made.

One analyst said the deal could mean \$500m a year savings across the new grouping, of which \$300m might accrue to Shell. "It is a very strong runner. It looks as though they are in serious talks."

The business would have sales of around \$20bn, assets of \$10bn and control a 15 per cent share of markets ranging from petrol and diesel, to heating oil and heavy fuel oil for power stations.

DIANE COYLE

Economics Editor

Shares in London set a new record for the second day running after Wall Street passed an important milestone during morning trading. The Dow Jones index climbed above the 6,000 level for the first time yesterday before the election did not help lift again.

The FTSE 100 index closed nearly 7 points higher at 4,031.5, although down from the day's earlier high of 4,046.8. The Dow Jones index gained 8 points to reach 6,002, boosted by news of a proposed joint venture between Texaco and Shell. Before falling back to 5,998 by late morning.

However, market nerves about potential clashes at the

Conservative Party conference this week took gilts slightly lower. The fact that weaker than expected figures yesterday for manufacturing output would have lifted the pressure of Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to raise interest rates before the election did not help pep up the gilts market.

Controversy about the single European currency unsettles gilts investors, and a new political row this week could jeopardise the recent narrowing of the spread between gilts and German government bonds. Hans Tietmeyer, the Bundes-

bank President, did not help yesterday when he repeated his view that countries which do not join the single currency should be excluded from Target, the planned payments system for euros.

Mr Tietmeyer said: "There cannot and must not be a 'Euro à la carte'. One of Germany's main objections to full participation by non-Euro banks in Target is that this would allow them to create liquidity in euros, which could undermine the price stability policies of the future European central bank."

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STOCK MARKETS		
FTSE 100	Dow Jones	Nikkei
1,999.00 +6.70 +0.2	4,031.50 -362.80 3,688	1,000.00 1,000.00
FTSE 250	4,441.00 +3.10 +0.1	4,688.60 4,015.30 3,447
FTSE 1000	20,005.00 +2.90 +0.1	20,005.00 18,656.60 3,791
FT Small Cap	2,180.15 +1.57 +0.1	2,244.26 1,954.06 3,121
FT All Share	1,978.05 +2.78 +0.1	1,978.05 1,791.95 3,231
New York	7,466.40 -7.46 -0.1	6,992.88 5,032.94 2,315
Tokyo	2,161.01 +12.98 +0.1	2,266.80 1,973.70 0.769
Hong Kong	12,133.07 +227.56 +1.9	12,133.07 10,204.67 3,424
Frankfurt	2,702.54 +19.36 +0.7	2,702.54 2,253.36 1,721
Source: FT Information		

INTEREST RATES		
Short sterling*	UK medium gilt*	US long bond
4.51 4.18	7.41	8.13 7.55 8.23
UK	5.31	6.18
US	5.25	5.75 6.48
Japan	0.50	0.53 2.75
Germany	3.00	3.13 6.03
Switzerland	0.00	0.00
Short sterling	4.51	7.41
UK medium gilt	7.41	8.13 7.55 8.23
US long bond	8.13	7.55 8.23
UK	5.31	6.18
US	5.25	5.75 6.48
Japan	0.50	0.53 2.75
Germany	3.00	3.13 6.03
Switzerland	0.00	0.00
Interest rates	4.51	7.41
1 Month	4.51	7.41
1 Year	5.31	6.18
Medium gilt (%)	7.41	8.13 7.55 8.23
US long bond (%)	8.13	7.55 8.23
UK	5.31	6.18
US	5.25	5.75 6.48

business

Price war sparked by new BT rates

MATHEW HORSMAN

A price war in the long-distance telephone market looked set to erupt last night as Energis, the telecoms provider owned by the National Grid, slashed its prices for business calls to the US to just 10p, which is 50 per cent lower than BT's basic rate.

The move coincided with a promise from Telewest, the country's largest cable operator, that its customers will pay less than BT rates on every equivalent phone bill.

The price war was seen last night as a response to BT's lower rates, effective today, which were mandated by Oftel, the telecoms regulator.

Sam Howe, Telewest's vice-president of residential services, said: "Despite the hype and the millions of pounds BT has spent in the press and on the TV, their price reductions are being introduced at Oftel's instruction. Our position is simple, we'll keep our promise – every bill is cheaper."

Energis' customers spending £150 a month per location on national and international calls will be required to register with the company to be eligible for the cheap US offer.

Energis is also offering lower prices to Australasia, Japan and other countries in the Far East. Daytime calls to these regions would cost at least 24 per cent less than BT's basic rate, the company said.

Anticipating BT's lower rates, a range of smaller, specialised telecoms operators also vowed to undercut the prices charged by the market leader. Swiftcall, one of many "callback" services which sell prices on the basis of the difference between outgoing and incoming international calls, said it would match the 10p offer from Energis. Meanwhile, rerouting ser-

vices such as Teleefficiency said last night they would continue to offer prices at least 15 per cent lower than BT's long-distance rates.

BT said it was "relaxed" about the announcements. "This just goes to show that competition is alive and well in the UK," a BT spokesman said. "Everyone knows that BT is reducing its prices [today] and so the market is responding."

But BT threw down a challenge, saying the 10p US offer was "just one price among many from Energis." The spokesman said: "We believe that, across the board, BT is still offering a competitive package."

Prices, particularly in the long-distance market, are set to fall even further as BT adjusts to the lower price base set by Oftel. It is expected to have to slash prices in real terms by 7 per cent, and BT said yesterday the long-distance market was bound to see "significant further reductions".

BT already operates a range of discount schemes. It said that large users already get deep discounts on international calls.

Energis, which built its fibre-optic national network in just two years, along existing rights of way used for its electricity infrastructure, said it aimed to keep the pressure on BT in coming months. Claiming it has the most modern network in the world, Energis' chief executive, Mike Gardiner, said: "It's the efficiencies of that technological lead which has given us price advantages in the UK, and we intend to maintain that position to provide competitive benefits in the future."

Energis supplies major corporate clients such as British Gas, ICL and Boots. It has earmarked the medium-sized business sector for some of its future growth.

Advisers to the two sides are

The television rights to Paddington Bear, worth as much as £10m, are up for sale, with a leading Canadian television producer the most likely buyer, writes Matthew Horsman.

The rights, bought for £1.5m just seven years ago by Caspian, the media company that now owns Leeds United, have attracted a bid from Cinar, the Montreal-based maker of children's programmes.

Advisers to the two sides are

in late-stage negotiations, and it is thought likely that the principals will have face-to-face meetings at Mipcom, the annual TV sales shindig, now under way in Cannes, France.

The deal, if it goes ahead, will mark a further explosion in the value of lucrative rights

to revered children's characters. The rights to Sooty were sold earlier this year to a group led by Guinness Mahon, the merchant bank.

Caspian declined to comment on the talks, but conceded publicly that discussions were under way.

Cinar's chief executive, Ron Weinberg, did not return calls.

The sale of the rights to

Paddington Bear, the fictional creation of Michael Bond (pictured with his wife, Brenda, above), follows a strategic decision by Caspian to concentrate on its core media and sport rights, sources close to company said yesterday.

"The company took the view that it should either increase its investment in this kind of business or sell it off," one source said.

London Clearing House to expand

JILL TREANOR
Banking Correspondent

The London Clearing House (LCH) will be looking at opportunities for extending its clearing services to other markets after new owners take control later this week, its chief executive said yesterday.

"I'm sure the new board will want to have a look at what's currently on ... we've got to see if there is anything else that could be done with the business, which

could benefit those people who have just bought it," said David Hardy, chief executive of the LCH.

"There are likely to be a number of initiatives around but clearly we don't want to go around treading on other people's toes," he said.

The LCH is broadening its present narrow ownership base of Barclays, Lloyds, Midland, NatWest, Standard Chartered and Bank of Scotland to include the 126 other clearing

members of London's futures exchanges. They will be paying just under £300,000 apiece for their stakes in the LCH.

The main futures exchanges, the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (LIFFE), the London Metal Exchange (LME) and the London Petroleum exchange, will also become shareholders with a combined stake of 25 per cent.

The new clearing members will contribute to a special

£150m default fund to be backed by a three-year insurance policy, providing an additional £100m worth of cover.

The LCH first suggested the alterations to its structure in June. Some 33 members have declined to accept the new structure.

The new structure will give a closer focus on other markets such as "swaps", arranged privately between firms, and not on any recognised exchange.

TI seals expansion of its polymer side with cash offer for Forsheda

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

TI doubled the size of its polymer engineering business yesterday with a £189m recommended cash offer for Forsheda, a Swedish sealing systems business. The deal is the latest in a series of "bolt-on" acquisitions the diversified engineering group has used to expand its three core businesses of fluid carrying, engineering seals and aircraft landing gear.

Sir Christopher Lewington, chairman, said: "Bringing together Forsheda, our current polymer business will create a £300m turnover operation with

world leadership potential. Forsheda's product ranges are entirely complementary to our own and TI's international strengths will enable their rapid globalisation.

The acquisition of Forsheda marks a continuation of the transformation of TI over the past 10 years from a loose consumer-based business to one of Britain's few globally competitive engineering businesses.

The shares, which have risen

from a low of 333p at the beginning of last year, added 2p to 572p yesterday.

Forsheda, which employs

1,250 at 18 locations in 13 countries, is recognised as a leading

maker of high technology poly-

mer sealing products for a range of industrial applications, the motor and defence industries. More than 80 per cent of its sales are in Europe and it has a growing North American business.

Sir Christopher added: "So far this year we have invested some £240m in bolt-on acquisitions. All of these are in line with our declared strategy and will accelerate organic growth in key business areas and enhance earnings in 1997."

TI secured agreement to accept the offer from Forsheda's controlling shareholder, Agora Group, by pitching a higher offer. Agora's higher voting A' shares, which give it 21 per cent of the equity but 64 per cent of

the company's votes. In return for a 10 per cent premium for its shares, Agora agreed not to compete with TI for two years.

In the year to December 1995, Forsheda had turnover of £134.6m from which it made pre-tax profits of £2.16m. At the year-end it had net assets of £51.9m. TI said yesterday it planned to accelerate Forsheda's growth, developing its world leadership in concrete pipe seals for the construction industry, its plastic pipe seals

business and its rotary seals and "O" rings which complement existing TI operations.

TI's Polymer Engineering business operates in seven countries. It had sales in 1995 of £140m.

Former BET head launches £3m claim

John Clark, the former chief executive of BET, yesterday launched his court claim for £3.3m compensation over his dismissal from the business services group in May.

American-born Mr Clark opposed the £2.2bn hostile takeover of BET by Renotoki, and has asked the courts to rule on his severance package.

He is claiming more than £1.4m for loss of salary, plus damages for loss of pension rights, stock and share options, bonus payments, an executive car and chauffeur, and health insurance.

His counsel, Brian Langstaff QC, told Mr Justice Timothy Walker it was perhaps inevitable his head would roll when Renotoki gained control of BET.

BET agreed it should compensate him, but hotly disputed

how much it was liable to pay, arguing that an executive of his stature should easily be able to find a new job and that he was thus bound to "mitigate his own loss". It said it offered Mr Clark the same "fair" terms as other former BET directors, all of whom had accepted the offer.

Mr Clark, 55, contended he would have serious difficulty in finding a new top executive post in a large British company because of his age and his "controversial" reputation, his counsel said.

Mr Langstaff said Mr Clark joined BET in November 1991, when it was regarded as being potentially loss-making. He succeeded in turning round BET. That was one of the few matters unlikely to be in dispute during the court hearing, said counsel.

Mr McDanell, 44, who left

MTV Europe a month ago following a four-year career as financial controller of the music station, said he accepted the job once Mr Wright, who also owns Queens Park Rangers football club, assured him he would remain executive chairman.

"Chris wants to be involved in the business and get on with attracting talent," Mr McDanell said. "I am there to handle the day-to-day business."

MTV Europe has struggled in the past two years, as it has expanded on the Continent and overseas. Mr McDanell is

thought to have been approached by Mr Wright a year ago, but had elected to stay on to work on improving the company's prospects.

Chrysalis is one of the leading independent television producers in the UK, and has a significant group of recording labels. But the company, which is

majority owned by Mr Wright, has frustrated some institutional investors because it has not created a sustainable earnings flow. It also surprised the City last month by pulling out of the feature film business.

Mr Wright, speaking from Cannes, said: "I was looking to bring someone in on the finance and administrative side, rather than a creative person. I was worried that someone from the creative side wouldn't get along with the people running the division."

Mr McDanell is a certified accountant and has worked for 15 years in the media. He joins Chrysalis on a two-year contract, with a year's notice period, and will be paid what the company called a "competitive" package that will include stock options.

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business

Smarter fashions suit Moss Bros

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

Moss Bros may not be Britain's largest menswear retailer but it is certainly one of the best performing. Investors have seen the shares more than treble in the last 18 months, rising from less than 400p to 1250p yesterday, up another 35p on the day. With another healthy hike in the dividend, the company is looking as sharp as a Cecil Gee suit.

Pre-tax profits in the six months to July soared by 54 per cent to £4.94m. Current trading is also strong with like-for-like sales 11 per cent ahead of the same period last year.

At first glance, the reason for this stellar performance is something of a mystery. Its brands such as The Suit Company, Cecil Gee and Savoy Taylors Guild do not immediately stand out as world beaters. And though retail fortunes are improving, the high street remains fiercely competitive.

But Moss Bros has been helped by a number of factors. First, the increasing popularity of suits have boosted sales at the company's different store formats. The line of formal suits through its Moss Bros chain has also been strong. Management keeps a tight rein on costs and is clever with regular promotions that have not dented margins.

There remains plenty of room for expansion. Five shops opened in the first half, taking the total to 160. A further 11 will open in the second.

The recently acquired Blazer chain, which made a small loss in the first half, will be doubled in size to around 50 stores. It should make a profit contribution in the full year. The excess of sites vacated by the likes of Liberty and the collapsed

Facia group should help Moss Bros' negotiating power with landlords.

Moss Bros' dapper managing director Rowland Gee was doing his best to dampen down over-enthusiasm yesterday, noting that the high street remains a challenging place and that consumers remain cautious.

But analysts were undeterred, increasing forecasts to £1.5m for the full year, which puts the shares on a dividend rating of almost 23. The worry is management may get carried away and over-stretch themselves with a larger acquisition. There were rumours a few months ago that Moss Bros may pounce on Austin Reed, though this was before the £7m purchase of the Blazer stores from Storehouse.

And impressive though the com-

pany's performance has been, the shares' strong run leaves little room for error. Moss Bros remains a quality company but the safest course is to take some profits.

Shot in the arm for Chiroscience

Chiroscience saw its shares leap in April on hopes that the biotechnology group's anti-cancer treatment would be more effective than British Biotech's Marinastat, the drug that set the sector alight last November. That fuelled a rise in the shares to a peak of 485p and the group promptly rolled out a £40.3m cash call at 410p.

Up now they have failed to breach that barrier, so yesterday's 15p rise to 411p is more than usually significant. Investors are regaining their confidence as they switch their focus to Levobupivacaine, a local anaesthetic which could be on sale in 1998 if all goes well. Yesterday's interim results, which saw losses increased from £5.2m to £7.3m in the six months to August, brought encouraging news on Levobupivacaine.

The company claims it has received initial support from the US Food and Drug Administration, which it hopes will approve the drug by the middle of 1998.

Chiroscience is optimistic that Levobupivacaine can win at least a third of a \$900m market, so much so that it parted company with Pharmacia & Upjohn, its development partner, earlier this year. But it still needs a marketing tie and expectations are high that current talks will deliver a link with a big drug group soon.

With £47m in the bank, Chiroscience should not need to raise more funds until it becomes self-financing through sales of Levobupivacaine. Even so, it still needs development partners to finance the £300m costs of developing its MMP drugs and its potential oral treatment for asthma, due to go into patient trials next year.

Even capitalised at £347m, Chiroscience will look grossly undervalued if all these deals come off. But the risks remain and next spring's announcement of the results of the Levobupi-

vacaine trials will be crucial to its credibility. Still speculative and recently buoyed by vague bid prospects.

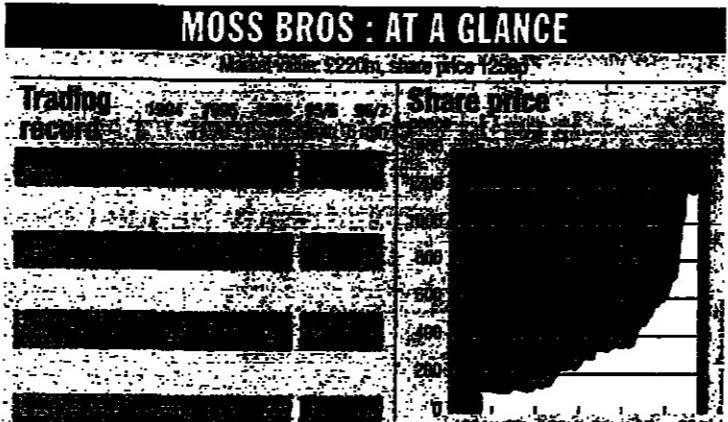
Manganeze is faring well

If you've ever stood in the rain trying to hail a black cab, you will be aware of what a good economic indicator London taxis can be. Manganeze Bronze, which makes most of them, has ridden the cycle with mixed success and came a cropper in the early 1990s as a shortage of foreign tourists compounded an already difficult economic backdrop. Since then, the company has gone from strength to strength.

Full-year figures for the 12 months to July yesterday showed a 48 per cent profit advance to £6.2m, well above consensus forecasts of about £5.5m. Earnings per share of 26.8p were 34 per cent higher, shriving out one-offs, and the dividend for the year was a full 40 per cent better at 7p (5p).

Demand is high and orders are benefiting from the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act, which means that all taxis operating in London must be wheelchair accessible within the next three years. That boost is becoming evident in production figures that increased from 52 to 60 vehicles a week during the year and are now running at 68 a week.

The shares have had a remarkable run since bottoming out at the end of 1992 at 66p. Yesterday they jumped another 14p to 360.5p. With forecast profit growth of only 10 per cent, that is high enough.



Merger storm may not blow over this time

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

Despite his 62 years, Graeme Odgers sees his reappointment as chairman of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC) for a further two years yesterday as "extremely challenging and extremely stimulating".

His three-and-a-half years in the office so far have been dominated by the privatised utilities. "We've had the first British Gas report, water, electricity. There is an element of consistency across the utilities which has been helped enormously by our involvement," he said.

Then there have been the bids for VSEL by GEC and British Aerospace, and the two power generation mergers which Mr Odgers opposed but which the

Government waved through. "Very interesting cases," he says.

There does, however, seem to be a storm looming. When Sir Bryan Carsberg was director general of the Office of Fair Trading, the regulatory policeman to the MMC's judiciary, Sir Bryan recommended that the two bodies be merged. Mr Odgers got the better of the argument, and Sir Bryan left the OFT 15 months ago.

But now the Labour party supports an OFT/MMC merger. What will happen next year if Tony and Co get in? "I think these are highly

complicated areas," Mr Odgers says diplomatically. "And who knows who will be the next party in power?"

Who indeed? Mr Odgers has a distinguished industrial career behind him, including the top job at BT. Does he have any plans for his next job when he leaves the MMC? He laughs. "I'm 62, so we'll leave that until it comes."

The Albert Fisher Group has appointed a new chief executive, Neil England, who is currently vice president of Mars, the American food giant, in Moscow.

But hang on a minute. The

British foods group Albert Fisher already has an executive chairman, the ambitious Stephen Walls. So who's going to run things?

"Mr England will run the worldwide company, day to day, driving the company forward," says an Albert Fisher spokesman. "This frees up Mr. Wall, who can concentrate on strategic issues."

This has tempted some observers of the food industry scene to speculate that Mr Wall will now be "freed up" to accept a job with a bigger company, as he is "not without ambition".

The Albert Fisher spokesman is not impressed by this idea, however.

"There's plenty of work for the two of them."

Richard Eyre, chief executive of Capital Radio, London's biggest independent radio station, is moving his head office and studios from the fly-blown wastes of the Euston Road to the throbbing heart of the West End - Leicester Square.

Capital is opening a hyper chic restaurant in the basement of its new building on 18 November to tie in with the move.

But the eatery will not be a themed tourist trap.

Instead Mr Eyre's restaurant will include a radio studio, with DJs such as Chris Tarrant and various rock stars popping in to do their stuff in front of the diners.

John Willcock

IN BRIEF

• Geo Interactive Media, the internet products developer, plans to join the Alternative Investment Market by way of a placing. The company, which has developed a product called Embaze that allows users to access animation, sound and video, also announced the appointment of three non-executive directors. They are David Golman who founded Sage; Chris Evans, who founded Chiroscience; and Peter Sheldon, a director of World of Leather. Price Waterhouse is the nominated adviser.

• Owen & Robinson, the retailing group, warned that full-year profits would fall short of analysts' expectations despite encouraging trading at the three recently opened stores. Maurice Dwek has resigned as a director and chairman to concentrate on his private business interests. He is being succeeded as chairman by Egon von Greyez, who spent 17 years at Dixons Group where he held several positions including vice chairman and group finance director.

• TR European Growth Trust has allowed its offer for the £500 Kleinwort European Privatisation Investment Trust to lapse after securing acceptances of only 3.04 per cent, representing 15,195 million shares.

• Capital & Regional Properties reported an active first half, both in terms of leasing and acquisitions, and simultaneously announced the purchase of a £15m leisure complex in Wolverhampton. Rental income for the six months to June rose from £4.9m to £7.9m, and profits before tax climbed from £2m to £2.5m. Since January, tenant demand, particularly for retail properties, has accelerated resulting in clear indications of rental growth, said Martin Barber, chairman of Capital.

• Ashtead Group, the equipment rental group, has bought Astra Pumps & Plant for an initial cash consideration of £12.5m. Astra hires pumps and non-operated plant in the Irish Republic. In the year ended 30 June 1996, the company increased its pre-tax profits by 60 per cent to £2.80m on turnover up 18 per cent to £14.3m.

• Huntleigh Technology has acquired Hoskins Healthcare, the Birmingham-based hospital bed manufacturer, from the receivers, Deloitte & Touche, for an undisclosed sum.

• Peter Black Holdings has paid Schell £2.5m for Gerard House, a maker of herbal medicines, essential oils and aromatherapy products. Gerard had sales of £2.5m in 1995.

• Polypipe, the building materials company, has purchased Norflex Holdings for £2.9m plus further payments of up to £800,000 dependent on profits from 1 January 1997 to 31 December 1999. Norflex, based in Newcastle, Lincolnshire, is involved in plastic pipes.

• London International Group is selling its remaining Woodward's Gripe Water and Teething Gel businesses in Southern Africa, Canada, the Far East and Australia for £5.6m to Seton Healthcare Group.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Aravinda Ind (F)	12.4m (2.4m)	0.50m (1.22m)	0.3p (1.1p)	0.12p (0.11p)
Match Makers (F)	- (-)	0.08m (0.07m)	0.75p (0.26p)	- (-)
Capital & Regional (F)	- (-)	2.52m (2.4m)	5p (3.7p)	1p (0.4p)
Cadentex (F)	- (-)	7.32m (5.52m)	1.4p (0.11p)	- (-)
Carillion (F)	132m (111m)	20.8m (14.1m)	15.7p (12.35p)	3.5p (3.05p)
Macmillan Group (F)	11.4m (-)	0.98m (-)	10p (-)	0.75p (-)
Dotcom (F)	32.9m (27.3m)	2.46m (1.92m)	11.82p (9.69p)	2.5p (2.1p)
Forking House (F)	4.55m (2.08m)	0.21m (0.11m)	3.8p (1.1p)	1.4p (1.2p)
London & Assoc Prop (F)	- (-)	0.02m (0.00m)	0.68p (0.18p)	0.05p (0.05p)
Manganeze Bronze (F)	97.3m (88.2m)	6.2m (4.2m)	20.8p (15.5p)	7p (5p)
Moss Bros (F)	41.6m (38.1m)	4.94m (3.21m)	18.34p (12.89p)	0.5p (0.5p)
Overseas Group (F)	27.5m (25.0m)	1.32m (1.21m)	1.72p (1.63p)	0.25p (0.23p)
Tay Homes (F)	11.10m (11.0m)	1.08m (7.08m)	2.4p (15.0p)	7p (7p)
TJ Hughes (F)	28.5m (22.1m)	0.24m (0.17m)	1.2p (0.21p)	0.4p (0.3p)
Waterman Partnership (F)	13.1m (10.5m)	0.67m (0.33m)	2.5p (1.3p)	1.2p (1.1p)

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Belgium	24p	36p	80p	131p
Bosnia-Herzegovina	56p	67p	26p	36p
Brazil	60p	131p	54p	340
Canada	16p	30p	70p	131p
Caribbean	56p	78p	45p	102p
Chile	68p	131p	60p	131p
China	80p	108p	80p	133p
Colombia	70p	135p	65p	131p
Costa Rica	70p	131p	45p	131p
Czech Rep	36p	45p	30p	36p
Denmark	16p	26p	30p	36p
Egypt	78p	126p	54p	350
El Salvador	70p	131p	80p	131p
Fiji	112p	135p	45p	102p
France	16p	26p	60p	102p
Germany				

Interest rates could be a big problem for Brown

The mid-point between the party conferences and inevitably eyes this week focused on Kenneth Clarke, not just as the leading "European" in the Cabinet, but as the architect (or at least the impresario) of the Budget. The Budget, after all, is the Government's last big card to play before the election.

But, of course, the balance of probability is that this will be a Budget which never happens. If, as is the balance of probability, Labour wins a May general election, many of its features will be modified almost immediately after they have been put into effect.

On the tax side, any immediate changes in excise duties will go into effect straight away in November, but changes in income taxation will only start in April, so that only one pay-packet at the new rate will be in people's bank accounts when the election comes.

Then, on the assumption that Labour is able to form the next government, there will have to be a second budget modifying the first, probably in June. This will be the first taste of what it might be like under the new government - the extent to which fiscal policy really will be different. While it might seem a touch premature to be discussing Labour's first shot when we have not yet had the Tories' last one, anyone seeking to think through the influences on financial markets in the next few months ought to start building a



ECONOMIC VIEW
HAMISH MCRAE

Labour budget into their time-frame.

Some assumptions: the evidence of the past few weeks confirms that manufacturing is growing slower and the services industry is growing faster.

According to yesterday's figures, manufacturing has not grown at all during the past 12 months, which means all the growth in the economy is taking place elsewhere. Service output has risen 3.2 per cent in the past year.

'A Labour chancellor will have to slow the economy, deciding how to do so within a few weeks of taking office'

It is very hard to see this growth slackening through the winter and spring, particularly given the one-off boosts to people's wealth that will come from the conversion of several building societies to quoted companies. So growth next summer will be running at somewhere between 3 and 4 per cent, unemployment will still be falling and, though, as yet,

sharp rise in inflation which needs to be met by a rise in base rates; and a PSBR stuck at £26bn, only slightly lower than this year's £25bn. We do not yet know the base line that Mr Clarke will set, but you can see the strategic problem an incoming Labour chancellor will face. He will have to slow the economy, taking a decision of how to do so within a cou-

ple of weeks of taking office. What

might this mean in practice?

NatWest has made some assumptions: that Mr Clarke cuts taxes by £5bn in November, a cut matched by cuts in spending, but enough to get in off income tax. He will not, they think, go for tax cuts over and above this - a view which would fit in with everything that Mr Clarke said in Washington at the IMF meeting last week.

But then what will Gordon Brown do? It would be very difficult to reverse the income tax cut, particularly since Labour will have had to give some pretty firm commitments in the election campaign. He will, however, be committed to some additional spending and while he will be able to call in the windfall tax on utilities, that is a one-off tax which will not (presumably) be repeated in later years. He will probably increase corporation profits tax or at least the burden of company taxation in some other form, but that will not bring in revenue for another year. Meanwhile the privatisation programme will wind down, depriving him of another source of revenue. NatWest assumes a rise in spending of rather more than £2bn, with taxation up a bit under £2bn so that the PSBR rises by only £500m.

It is an interesting exercise because it shows just how difficult it will be for the new government to do anything radical - to do more than fiddle a bit with numbers already handed to it. In public finance terms

a couple of billion extra of taxation or spending is nothing, for it is well within the forecasting errors of recent years. Adding less than a billion to the PSBR is also a minimal change.

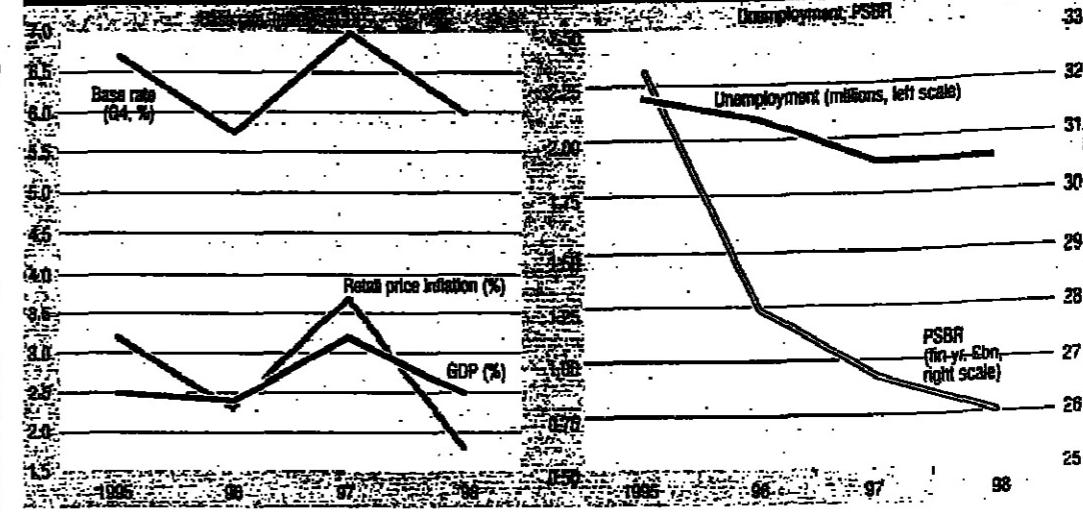
Even so, there is a problem, for

any increase in the PSBR will be

greeted adversely by the markets,

which will already be expecting a rise

FORECAST SUMMARY



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and though this will probably be small, Labour will have to lean harder against inflation: which means even higher interest rates.

That seems to be what the professionals expect, to judge by surveys of business opinion.

I suspect that these considerations may encourage Mr Brown to try to run a tighter fiscal policy than

reputation that it wants, as fiscally responsible, then the prize of cheaper long-term borrowing could be grasped quite quickly. Remember that UK public finances have to stack up against those of other EU members whether, or not Britain joins EMU - or perhaps one should say whether, or not EMU happens, for despite the current mood that it will, the practical difficulties are far from resolved.

It should not be too difficult for the UK to establish a fiscal position which is at least as favourable as that of France or Germany, but to do so means coming down from £26bn PSBR to £20bn or lower.

Is it credible that Labour might introduce something that feels like an austerity budget within a month of taking office? If you believe the answer is "yes", then all expectations of higher inflation, higher interest rates and higher spending would be wrong. If not... expect Labour to run up the learning curve and bring in the austerity Budget in 1998, not 1997.

It will be very difficult for a new government to do any more than fiddle with numbers already handed to it'

in interest rates. The clear danger for Labour is that interest rates will have to be higher than they would under a Tory government, partly because of concern about a later fiscal stance, but also because of higher inflationary expectations.

Other policies of Labour, in particular the minimum wage, will have some effect in increasing inflation

Clarke, not a looser one. If this is right, the June budget would be very interesting politically, for somehow spending would have to be cut below low rates, or there would have to be tax increases over and above those already planned.

It would be even more interesting in economic and financial terms, for if Labour can quickly establish the

Foreign Exchange Rates	
Country	Sterling
US	1.5638
Canada	2.1822
Germany	2.2393
Spain	0.8888
Japan	1.7370
EU	0.8523
Belgium	0.8959
Denmark	0.9645
Netherlands	2.0281
Ireland	0.8765
Portugal	0.9712
UK	0.7472
Australia	1.9879
Hong Kong	12.091
New Zealand	2.2590
Saudi Arabia	5.8520
Singapore	2.2073

Forward rates (right to left are at a discount; rates quoted to four decimal places)

* Dollar rates quoted as reciprocals.

For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 223 3033.

Calls cost 36p per minute (cheapest rate) 48p other times.

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Interest Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot	1 month	3 months
US	5.75%	5.6	16-13	1.000	0.8534	1.02	1.02
Canada	5.72	5.34	12-10	1.2533	5.18	5.58	5.58
Germany	5.75	5.52	12-10	1.2530	5.21	5.65	5.65
Spain	5.68	5.57	4.90-4.68	5.7122	5.05	5.25	5.25
Japan	5.72	5.45	12-14	1.2515	5.45	5.75	5.75
EU	5.71	5.52	12-14	1.2515	5.45	5.75	5.75
Belgium	5.69	5.47	12-14	1.2515	5.45	5.75	5.75
Denmark	5.67	5.45	12-14	1.2515	5.45	5.75	5.75
Netherlands	5.65	5.43	12-14	1.2515	5.45	5.75	5.75
Ireland	5.63	5.41	12-14	1.2515	5.45	5.75	5.75
Portugal	5.61	5.39	12-14	1.2515	5.45	5.75	5.75
UK	5.59	5.37	12-14	1.2515	5.45	5.75	5.75
Australia	5.57	5.35	12-14	1.2515	5.45	5.75	5.75
Hong Kong	5.55	5.33	12-14	1.2515</			

SPORT

Coppell preaches realism at City

Football

GUY HODGSON

You could almost hear ghosts of Maine Road packing their bags and leaving. Manchester City yesterday did themselves of a pre-occupation with happenings at Old Trafford by appointing a former Manchester United player, Steve Coppell, as their eighth manager in 10 years.

Coppell arrived preaching realism and good sense. There were no bold boasts, just a promise of hard work and hope, and, to put the supporters' minds at rest, the new manager said he had no intention of selling Georgi Kinkladze.

"Expectations have to be re-aligned," Coppell said. "The reality of the First Division has to be adjusted to. People say there's no quality in it but it's a war every Saturday. It's hard to express yourself and hard to

sell and by numerous others through the media. Bassett's decision is particularly paradoxical as Coppell, nominally, was his boss at Selhurst Park. "I have blinkers about this job," Coppell said, referring to Bassett's decision not to move north. "I didn't think about anybody else. This is a massive club and a golden opportunity that I'd have been a fool to turn down."

Coppell will have as his No 2 Phil Neal, who resigned from Cardiff yesterday to become his assistant.

Francis Lee, the chairman who has come increasingly under fire from supporters in the interregnum between Ball and Coppell, did not feel his new man's Old Trafford connections would be a problem.

"It's a long since he played for United you can't bring it into it," he said. "It's something that happened in the past. He had a wonderful career at United but you have to move on in this profession." Listing Coppell's attributes for the job he added: "I think he's got great integrity, he's got a proven record at Crystal Palace, a great knowledge of the game and he's a good motivator."

Coppell has not been in management since 1993, when he resigned from Palace after they were relegated from the Premiership, but Lee saw that as a blessing. "Sometimes you can be in it too long and if you step back you come back refreshed," he said.

Coppell's arrival will make him an unusual figure at City's Platt Lane training ground in front of the television last night. For them, however, the main event was not Channel 4's documentary on Paul Gascoigne, but a private video from the Glenn Hoddle collection.

The tape detailed the strengths and weaknesses of Poland, England's World Cup opponents at Wembley tomorrow night. Later, the bulk of the team watched the Gascoigne



As England prepare to face Poland tomorrow, Ken Jones looks back to their historic Wembley match in 1980

THE INDEPENDENT • TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER 1996



Glenn Hoddle (centre) sets his England squad a good example in training at Bisham Abbey yesterday.

Photograph: David Ashdown

Hoddle waxes lyrical about Gascoigne

GLENN MOORE

England's footballers, like most of their fans, were gathered in front of the television last night. For them, however, the main event was not Channel 4's documentary on Paul Gascoigne, but a private video from the Glenn Hoddle collection.

The tape detailed the strengths and weaknesses of Poland, England's World Cup opponents at Wembley tomorrow night. Later, the bulk of the team watched the Gascoigne

film, but for Hoddle it would have held little more than curiosities value.

The England coach knows that his tape, although carefully compiled, can merely give a suggestion as to what to expect from Poland - only by playing them will England discover their true nature.

The same with Gascoigne. The film, for all its qualities, could only offer a flavour of a complex man, to understand him fully you would have to sit him down and get to know him personally.

"I have spoken to him at length, about lots of things. I thought he was a serious man who wants to succeed. I get the impression he wants to change his life. I know what has been said about him, including his

drinking. I am not interested in that, I am only interested in the Paul Gascoigne I see before me, he is the one I want to understand. I see a skillful footballer with a great attitude and a caring person.

"He is married, has a son now

and I believe that has made a big difference to him. Maybe I am lucky, maybe it has taken him this far to realise how good he is.

"He should look at his baby lying in bed at night, a baby's body needs careful looking after - it is special. When a foot-

baller gets to 30, so does his body - you must take care of things properly and not abuse it. He can play longer than he thought. He can play until he is at least 35; this World Cup and, yes, another one. He loves the game and that is a great starting point.

"When you get to 30, if you can play, if you have skill and wonderful ability, life gets easier. It should not get harder. If you look after yourself, a baby's body needs careful looking after - it is special. When a foot-

baller gets to 30, so does his

body - you must take care of things properly and not abuse it. He can play longer than he thought. He can play until he is at least 35; this World Cup and, yes, another one. He loves the game and that is a great starting point.

"He has a lot more to offer than the image of Paul Gascoigne so many people see. A lot of people have the wrong impression, but I know what my impression is.

"He should get up every morning and feel ready to take on the world. He has a deep love for England and wants to succeed. The Paul Gascoigne I've spoken to is the Gascoigne want in my side and that is a great asset for English football."

"One topic Hoddle addressed in his meeting was the need for Gascoigne to avoid cautions. He made the point yesterday that the new refereeing strictures help a player like Gascoigne when he has the ball - but can go against him when he has not.

"The way things are now, the old man-markers have been taken out of the game. There won't be any more Claudio Gentiles," he added, referring to the notorious Italian defender. "They would not get away with the things they used to, they will now be sent off."

"The changes have been brought in to help good technical players, like Gazzetta, but he's got to calm himself when opponents have the ball."

"Neither side is expected to name its team until shortly before kick-off."

FA bans Poole for two more matches

ANDREW MARTIN

idence from the referee, the 29-year-old player, his manager, Trevor Francis, and Birmingham's assistant physiotherapist, John Price, who had examined the referee after the game.

Poole, having already sat out two matches, now misses Birmingham's home game against Bradford on Saturday and tonight's fixture at Huddersfield.

Another official, the referee Paul Danson, has admitted he was wrong to send off Sunderland's Paul Stewart against Arsenal at Highbury a week last Saturday. The striker will now escape a one-match suspension.

Danson, who had already sent off the Sunderland defender Martin Scott for two bookable fouls, agreed to review

Stewart's dismissal at a weekend seminar with the FA and the

League Managers' Association.

Stewart, who had already been booked for handball, repeated the offence, but claimed he was fouled by Arsenal's Steve Bould. Danson told the FA: "It was a genuine misinterpretation on my part."

He has asked the FA to disregard the second yellow card against Stewart, although the first offence will still count for two disciplinary points.

Peter Reid, the Sunderland manager, sent from the touchline about agreeing with Danson on Scott's dismissal, has already been charged by the FA with bringing the game into disrepute.

The Manchester United striker Andy Cole had X-rays yesterday to determine the extent of a fracture to his left leg, which was discovered after he broke his right ankle in a challenge by Liv-

erpool's Neil Ruddock in a reserve match. A small crack below his left knee is believed to be the result of wear and tear, and United hope it will heal in the next three months.

England could have three clubs in next season's Champions League, providing Cole's club, Manchester United, win this season's competition. UEFA, football's European governing body, has issued clarified guidelines governing the 1997-98 tournament. For three Premier League teams to be involved, United would have to lift the Champions League trophy in May as well as finishing outside the top two in the Premiership.

United would then automatically qualify as reigning European champions, along with the winners and runners-up in the Premiership.

The Manchester United

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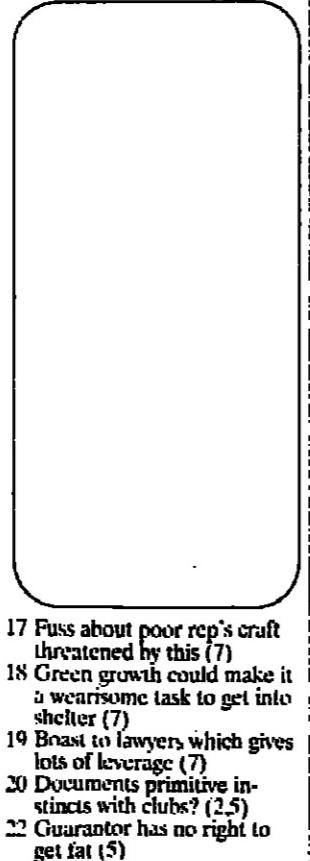
The Manchester United

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3112, Tuesday 8 October

By Andrew

Monday's Solution



- ACROSS**
- Having much to hide? (5,7)
 - Newsmen out of bed for some physical activity (5,2)
 - Attack doctor in committee? (7)
 - Pig runs round lobby showing no subtlety (7)
 - Graduate presently to be a tenor oboe? (7)
 - Rhode Island sermon which could give you a bit of a lift (5)
 - What could be drowned by me? Mortals maybe? (9)
 - Yielders of cannabis harvest? (3,6)
 - Murderer retains right to have mark of respect (5)
 - Advances leaving no way out? (7)
 - Print made smaller to fit on box? (7)
 - Raise European tax in general? (7)
- DOWN**
- To turn over room would reveal protective bits of footwear? (7)
 - No time to abuse a king for not taking the broad view (7)
 - Abandoned lady? It might seem not (4,5)
 - Bake sizzling British dish (5)
 - Making sin seem to be retribution? (7)
 - Charm of hair brushed up for us? (7)
 - Address oneself to a job and work in busy shire (12)
 - Church's removal of proposal? (12)
 - In East college women present significance of alibi? (9)
 - Guarantor has no right get fat (5)
 - Put ban on Spain's doctor joining old Greek boat (7)
 - They want partners to have singletons in red suits? (6,6)
 - Reinsman avoids (7)
 - Belie redesign (7)
 - A tall living determined ceder (7)
 - EWNSB prevent charade scorpio? (7)
 - WRU callous (7)
 - VALVE groundling? (7)
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Leeds quit Headingly in 'deal of the century'

Cricket

DEREK HODGSON

Yorkshire yesterday announced that they are to abandon Headingly - one of the game's great venues - and move to a new £50m complex at Wakefield.

Where they hope to be installed by 2000.

Headingly, the county's home since 1896 and a venue for 59 Tests, some of the most famous in history, will be left behind for a greenfield site on which will be built a stadium seating 25,000 to 35,000 with parking for 1,400 vehicles. Amazingly, the move will cost the club nothing.

Yorkshire, tenants at their Leeds base, will own the complex, which will be developed in conjunction with Wakefield Metropolitan Council, who will fund the project through grants, including £25m from the National Lottery, and land sales. Wakefield Council's leader, Colin Croxall, called it "the deal of the century. World-beating facilities for all cost.

The new site is close by the junction of the M1 and M62, 90 minutes' drive for 17 million people. A railway runs alongside and Wakefield will build a new station. There will be five practice pitches, the Cricket Academy, Indoor School, conference and banqueting facilities a multi-purpose, a creche, library and a marina on the River Calder.

Work can start immediately with the aim of playing first-class cricket from the old ground but the committee, and president Sir Lawrence Byford, feel they have the support of the great majority of Yorkshire's 10,000 members.

Wakefield council have already done a smoothly pro-

fessional PR job. Each Yorkshire member has already received a video, the theme of which is "Yorkshire cannot survive on nostalgia".

A fifth of all the cricket played in England is played within the county but the county club, 33 times champions, have never, as Sir Lawrence pointed out yesterday, owned more than an office block and an indoor school.

The argument for the move is apparently irrefutable: Yorkshire will get a £25m stadium, designed by Arup Associates, who have already built stadiums in Johannesburg and designed an indoor school.

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The announcement leaves a question mark against the future of the Headingly complex, which is owned by Leeds Rugby League Club, whose headquarters are back-to-back with the cricket ground. There have been reports of a takeover by Caspian, who own Leeds United, and a subsequent move to Elland Road. That could leave Leeds Rugby Union Club homeless when their three-year deal to play home games at Headingly runs out.

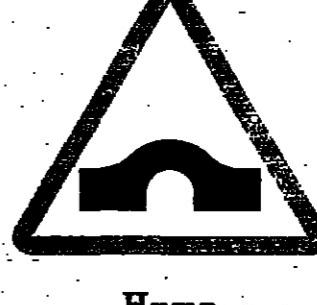
Yorkshire have been contemplating the move for two years. Headingly, like other im-

portant grounds, has enormous traffic and parking problems. The ground is owned by the Leeds Rugby League Club, who take advertising and catering revenue and who have been prevented from improving facilities by objections from residents.

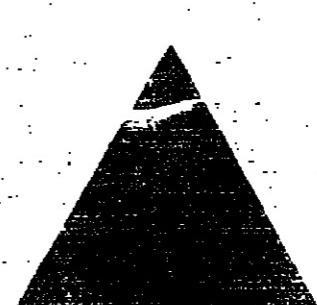
Crowd behaviour on the Western Terrace in recent years has become a major liability, bringing calls for the removal of the Test fixture, and in the North-east, Durham's spanking new ground at Riverside posed a future rivalry.

Leeds Council have tried hard to keep Yorkshire within the city boundaries by offering alternative sites but their proposals involve planning enquiries and would have been costly. The Leeds Club have offered to sell Headingly to Yorkshire but the cricket club would have been left with the attendant problems plus rebuilding costs.

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Hump bridge.



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